

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

---

AUGUST 1898.

---

## *FIGHTS FOR THE FLAG.*

BY THE REV. W. H. FITCHETT,  
AUTHOR OF 'DEEDS THAT WON THE EMPIRE.'

What is the flag of England? Winds of the world declare!—KIPPLING.

---

### VIII.<sup>1</sup>

#### MARLBOROUGH AT BLENHEIM.

AUGUST 13, 1704.

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,  
'Who put the French to rout;  
But what they fought each other for,  
I could not well make out.  
But everybody said,' quoth he,  
'That 'twas a famous victory.'—SOUTHEY.

AMONG the historical treasures of Blenheim House is a slip of paper on which are scribbled a dozen lines in pencil. Those lines were written by the Duke of Marlborough at the close of the fierce death-wrestle at Blenheim. The tumult of battle was rolling westward, where French and Bavarians were in disordered retreat, with Marlborough's cavalry riding fiercely on their rear. The smoke of the great fight yet hung black in the heavens. The slopes of the hills to the right, where Prince Eugene had four times over made his fiery onset, and the marshy plain in the centre where Marlborough himself, by a cavalry charge worthy of Murat—8,000 cavalry joined in one furious onset of galloping hoofs—had broken through the French centre, were strewn with

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by the Rev. W. H. Fitchett. All rights reserved.

nearly 30,000 killed and wounded. But Marlborough, with the rapture of the great fight still dancing in his blood, pulled up his horse on one of the little rustic bridges across the Schwanbuch and scribbled these dozen lines to his imperious and bitter-tempered wife in London to tell her of the great event.

Marlborough, apparently, borrowed the scrap of paper from some member of his staff, for on the back of it are the faded items of a tavern bill. He used the parapet of the bridge for a writing-desk; he had been seventeen hours in the saddle, most of that time riding in the very heart of one of the greatest battles in all history; yet the firm shape of the letters is a curious testimony to that serenely unshakeable temperament which was Marlborough's most striking characteristic. This scrap of paper, tavern bill on one side, martial despatch on the other, with its few lines scribbled on the parapet of a German bridge, is the record of one of the greatest victories in British history—a victory which has profoundly affected the development of the British Empire. Southey, it is true, affects to doubt whether Blenheim has any genuine historical value:—

‘With fire and sword, the country round  
Was wasted far and wide;  
And many a childing mother then,  
And new-born baby died;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
At every famous victory.

‘And everybody praised the duke,  
Who this great fight did win.’  
‘But what good came of it at last?’  
Quoth little Peterkin.  
‘Why, that I cannot tell,’ said he,  
But ‘twas a famous victory.’

But then Southey's politics coloured his poetry. Creasy, with justice, places Blenheim amongst the fifteen decisive battles of the world. It was a battle in the seventeenth century which, for a time at least, destroyed the military fame and power of France almost as completely as Sedan did in the nineteenth century. ‘A hundred victories since Rocroi,’ says Green the historian, ‘had taught the world to regard the French army as invincible when Blenheim, and the surrender of the flower of the French soldiery, broke the spell.’ But this was the least result of Blenheim. Its great merit is that it shattered absolutely and finally the attempt of Louis XIV. to establish a sort of universal empire. Louis XIV.

is looked at to-day through the lens of his defeated and inglorious old age, and the true scale of his intellect, and of his ambition, is not realised. But in the qualities of an imperious will, a masterful intellect, and an ambition which vexed the peace and threatened the freedom of the world, Louis XIV. comes nearer Napoleon than not merely any other character in French history, but any other character in modern European history. 'To concentrate Europe in France, France in Paris, and Paris in himself,' was the ideal of Louis XIV., exactly as it was of Napoleon. The two best remembered epigrams of Louis—'L'état c'est moi,' and 'There are no longer any Pyrenees,' perfectly express the temper of his intellect and the daring of his schemes. And he came almost as near achieving success as Napoleon did. The great Bourbon had forty years of nearly unbroken triumph. He had at least one faculty of genius, that of choosing fit instruments. Louvois organised his finances, Vauban built his fortifications, Turenne and Villars and Berwick led his armies. Louis' ambition was not less perilous to the world because through it ran a leaven of religious intolerance. His revocation of the Edict of Nantes drove 400,000 of the best citizens of France into exile, while another 100,000 perished of hardship, or of imprisonment, or on the scaffold. When his grandson ascended the throne of Spain and the Indies, it seemed as if the French King's dream of a world monarchy was about to be realised. The 'Spain' of that date, it must be remembered, included the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples, Milan, half Italy, in a word, and more than half America. Here, then, was the menace of an empire which in scale exceeded that of Caesar, and in temper was inspired by the policy which drove the Huguenots into exile, and would have kept the Stuarts, as French pensioners, on the throne of England. As Alison puts it, 'Spain had threatened the liberties of Europe at the end of the sixteenth century; France had all but overthrown them in the close of the seventeenth.' What hope was there for the world if the Spain that launched the Armada against England, and the France which drove the Huguenots into exile, were united under a monarch like Louis XIV., with his motto, 'L'état c'est moi'?

Our own William III. headed, with much ill fortune, but with quenchless courage, the confederacy of England, Holland, Austria, and the other independent powers against the ambition of Louis XIV. When he died, Marlborough brought to the same great task a happier fortune, and yet more splendid abilities; and

Blenheim is the victory which changed the face of history, turned to thinnest air the ambitious dreams of Louis XIV., saved Protestantism throughout Europe, and secured for the English-speaking race that freedom of development it could never have found under a Stuart dynasty, and which has made possible the British Empire of to-day.

In 1703 Bavaria joined France as an ally, and opened the door for the French generals into the very heart of Germany. At the beginning of 1704 Louis had no less than eight separate armies on foot, and his field of war stretched from Portugal to Italy. But Louis himself shaped the lines of a campaign which, in boldness of conception, is worthy to stand beside almost any of Napoleon's. One French army was already wintering in Bavaria in combination with the army of the Elector there. Louis' plan was to wage a purely defensive war at all other points; a second French army, under Marshal Tallard, on the Upper Rhine, was to march through the Black Forest into Bavaria; Villeroy, with forty battalions and thirty-nine squadrons, was to move from Flanders on the Moselle, and thence to the Danube; Vendôme, with the army of Italy, was to penetrate through the Tyrol to Salzburg. Thus four great armies were to converge to a given point in the valley of the Danube, and march upon Vienna, and there finally overthrow the Confederacy.

Marlborough penetrated this design. To be waging a few more or less inglorious sieges in Flanders, while the French generals were marching on Vienna, was, he clearly saw, to suffer hopeless and final defeat. He met Louis' strategy by a great counterstroke: a march from Flanders through the rough country of the Upper Rhine to the Danube, gathering as he went reinforcements from every side. But the British general had to win a victory in half a dozen Cabinets before he could put a single soldier on the march. He had to persuade Dutch deputies, English ministers, and Imperial statesmen to consent to his strategy, and he obtained that consent by concealing its real scale from them almost as completely as he did from Louis XIV. himself. Only, perhaps, to Prince Eugene, a soldier of like spirit to himself, now in command of the Austrian armies, to Heinsius, his faithful ally in Holland, and to Godolphin, his brother-in-law at the English Treasury, did Marlborough unfold his complete design. The Dutch would never have consented to fight the French on the remote Danube; but they were lured into the



scheme of a march to Coblenz, for the purpose of a campaign on the Moselle.

Marlbrough's movements curiously puzzled the French generals. When he reached Coblenz, everybody believed he was going to fight on the Moselle. When he reached Mayence it was guessed that he was about to attack Alsace. But when he crossed the Neckar, and kept on his steadfast march through Würtemberg, his plan stood disclosed. There was wrath in Holland, alarm in Paris, and much agitated riding to and fro betwixt the headquarters of the various French armies; but it was too late for the Dutch to object, and also too late for the French generals to intercept his movement, and it was clear that the combination of three French armies under Tallard, Marsin, and the Bavarian Elector, Max Emanuel, on the Danube would be met by a counter concentration of three armies under Marlborough, Prince Eugene, and the Margrave Louis.

Marlbrough's march to the Danube was a grand scheme grandly executed. Part of the route crossed the great chain of rugged hills in Würtemberg known by the name of the Rauhe Alp—the rugged Alps—but through wild passes, across swift rivers, and in spite of tempestuous weather, the steadfast Englishman pressed on. The strength of Marlborough's force consisted of 16,000 British, sturdy infantry, equal in endurance and warlike temper to Wellington's Light Division in the Peninsula, or to the foot-guards who held the Sand-bag battery at Inkerman. Amongst the British cavalry was a regiment of Scots Greys and another of Royal Dragoons, equal in valour to those who, more than a century afterwards, charged across the sunken road upon the French cuirassiers at Waterloo. Their officers were men like Cutts and Rowe and Kane and Ingoldsby, not, perhaps, great generals, but soldiers who, in fighting quality, in the stubborn bull-dog pluck that never recognises defeat, were equal to the Pictons, and Craufurds, and Colin Campbells of a later date.

Marlbrough crossed the Rhine on May 26; on June 10, at Mondelsheim, he met Prince Eugene, and began one of the most loyal and memorable friendships in military history. Three days later the junction with Margrave Louis was effected at Gross-heppach.

The tree still stands under which, nearly two hundred years ago, the three commanders sat and planned the campaign which ended at Blenheim. Of that historic three the Englishman was,

no doubt, intellectually the greatest, and certainly stands highest in fame. He was fifty-four years of age; he had won no first-class battle yet, but during the next seven years he was to win a series of the greatest victories in British history. He lacked, perhaps, Wellington's fighting impulse. Marlborough, during ten campaigns, fought only five pitched battles; Wellington, in seven, fought fifteen. But Marlborough never fought a battle he did not win, nor besieged a fortress he did not take, and in many respects he is the greatest military genius the British race has produced.

The Margrave Louis of Baden owed his place in the group under the historic tree at Grossheppach rather to his rank than to his military skill; but Prince Eugene of Savoy was in every respect a great soldier. As Stanhope puts it, he was an Italian by descent, a Frenchman by training, and a German by adoption; and in his signature, 'Eugenio von Savoye,' he used to combine the three languages. A little man, black-haired, black-complexioned, with lips curiously pendulous, and mouth semi-open; but with eyes through which looked a great and daring spirit. Eugene was a soldier as daring as Ney or Murat, and with their delight in the rapture of the onfall, the thunder of galloping hoofs, and the loud challenge of the cannon. But he was also one of the most loyal and generous of men, and if Marlborough was the brain of the great campaign just beginning, Eugene was its sword.

There is no space to dwell on the intermediate movements, nor even on the desperate fight round the Schellenberg, and the stern courage with which the British at last carried it, but carried it at a loss of nearly one-third their number. On August 11, 1704, the two great armies confronted each other at Blenheim.

Blenheim is a little village on the bank of the Danube; a stream called the Nebel, gathering its sources from the roots of the wooded hills to the west, runs in its front, and, curving round, so that its course is almost from north to south, falls into the Danube. From Lutzingen, on the lower slope of the hills, to Blenheim on the Danube, is a distance of four and a half miles. Blenheim formed the right wing of the French, and in it Tallard had packed nearly 16,000 infantry, the flower of his troops, fortifying the village with strong palisades. Lutzingen, on the extreme left, was held by Marsin and the Bavarian Elector, and, from the nature of the ground, was almost impregnable. Betwixt

these two positions was a marshy plain through which the Nebel flowed; in the middle of it stood a village called Oberglauh, held by fourteen battalions, amongst which were three Irish regiments destined to play a great part in the fight. Tallard covered his centre by a long screen of cavalry, strengthened by two brigades of infantry. His position thus was of great strength at either extremity, but his centre, though covered by the Nebel, and strengthened by the village of Oberglauh, was of fatal weakness, and through it Marlborough burst late in the fight, winning his great victory by a stupendous cavalry charge. It is curious, however, that Marlborough, though he had a military glance of singular keenness, did not discover the flaw in his opponent's line till the battle had been raging some hours.

Eugene, with 18,000 men, was to attack Tallard's left; Marlborough himself, with his best troops, nearly 30,000 strong—9,000 of them being British—was to attack Blenheim and try and turn the French right. His cavalry was to menace the centre. Tallard had under his command 60,000 men, with ninety guns; Marlborough had 56,000 men and sixty-six guns. Marlborough's weakness lay in the strangely composite character of his forces. The battle, in this respect, has scarcely any parallel in history. To quote the historian Green, 'The whole of the Teutonic race was represented in the strange medley of Englishmen, Dutchmen, Hanoverians, Danes, Würtembergers, and Austrians who followed Marlborough and Eugene.' Nothing less than the warlike genius and masterful will of Marlborough could have welded into effectiveness an army made up of such diverse elements.

Day broke on August 13 heavy with mist; and under its cover the allied forces moved forward to the attack. Tallard was quite unprepared for an engagement, when the fog, lifting for a moment, showed the whole landscape before him peopled with moving battalions and fretted with the gleam of steel. Marlborough waited till Eugene could launch his assault on the left wing of the French, and so difficult was the ground that not till nearly twelve o'clock did an aide-de-camp, galloping at speed, announce that the Prince was ready to engage. The fighting on the wooded ridges round Lutzingen was of the fiercest. Four times Eugene launched his troops in furious onset on the enemy, but such was the strength of the position held by the French and Bavarians, and with such steady valour did they fight, that Eugene's assaults were all repulsed, and he himself was only

saved from disaster by the iron steadfastness of the Prussian infantry, on whose disciplined ranks the Bavarian cavalry flung themselves in vain.

The chief interest of the fight belongs to the left wing and centre, where Marlborough commanded in person. He first attempted to turn Tallard's right by assailing Blenheim. He launched against it a great infantry attack, consisting of five British battalions, with one Hessian battalion, under Rowe, supported by eleven battalions and fifteen squadrons under Cutts.

Nothing could be finer than the onfall of the British. They carried with a single rush some mills which acted as a sort of outpost to Blenheim; then, dressing their ranks afresh, they moved coolly forward to attack the broad front of palisades which covered Blenheim. The village was crowded with 16,000 of Tallard's best troops, behind the palisades knelt long lines of infantry, while a second line standing erect fired over the heads of their kneeling comrades.

The broad red column, its general, Rowe, leading, came on with iron steadiness, the tramp of the disciplined battalions every moment sounded nearer and more menacing. When the British were within thirty yards the French fired. The long front of palisades sparkled with flame, a furious whirlwind of white smoke covered the whole front, and this was pierced again, and yet again, by the darting flames of new volleys. The British front seemed to crumble under that tempest of shot; yet it never swerved or faltered. On through smoke and flame it came. Rowe led it, moving straight forward, till he struck the palisades with his sword, and bade his men fire. The whole British front broke at the word into flame. Then the men, their officers leading, tried to carry the palisades with the bayonet. The great breach at Badajos did not witness a more fiery valour; but Blenheim was held by a force double in strength to that attacking it, with every advantage of position, and a front of fire more than double that of the British, and the attempt was hopeless from the outset. Rowe fell badly wounded; the two officers in succession who took command after he fell, were slain. The men, under the whirling smoke, and scorched with the flames of incessant volleys, were trying to tear up the palisades with their hands, or clamber over them by mounting on each other's shoulders.

Suddenly through the smoke on their left came the thunder

of galloping hoofs, and with a long-sustained crash twenty squadrons of French horse broke in on the British flank. The men fought in broken clusters and with desperate courage, but Rowe's regiment was almost destroyed, and its colours fell into the enemy's hands. Cutts, however—nicknamed by his men 'the Salamander,' from his lust of fighting and habit of always being found where the fire was hottest—had brought up the second line, and the French cavalry recoiled before the stern valour with which the infantry fought. As they recoiled some squadrons under Lumley came upon them in a gallop, recaptured the colours of Rowe's regiment, and drove the Frenchmen in disorder back to their lines.

Marlborough watched the furious strife around Blenheim with steady eye, and was satisfied that in Blenheim itself Tallard was impregnable. He withdrew his troops from the attack, the men falling sullenly back, full of unsatisfied eagerness for a new assault; but Marlborough had discovered the flaw in Tallard's centre. He kept up the feint of an attack on Blenheim, but commenced to push his cavalry and some battalions of infantry through the marshy ground and across the Nebel which covered Tallard's centre.

It was a difficult feat. Tracks through the marshy bottom had to be made with fascines and planks, and along these the mud-splashed cavalry crept, in single file, and floundered through the Nebel, or crossed by temporary bridges. Tallard committed the fatal mistake of not charging them till they had crossed in great numbers; then, while they were busy re-forming, he flung his squadrons upon them. But Marlborough had stiffened his cavalry with some battalions of infantry, and while the French and Bavarian cavalry broke in furious waves of assault upon them, these stood, like steadfast islets ringed with steel and fire, with exactly the same immovable valour the British squares showed at Waterloo more than a century afterwards. Tallard's horse recoiled, Marlborough's squadrons re-formed, and the moment for the great cavalry assault, which was to break the French centre and win Blenheim, came.

First, however, the village of Oberglauch, which stood as a sort of rocky barrier in the line of the coming charge, and was strongly held by an infantry force, had to be carried. Marlborough launched the Prince of Holstein-Beck, with eleven battalions of Hanoverians, against the village; but part of the force which held

the village consisted of the celebrated Irish brigade, the last survivors of the gallant and ill-fated battalions who followed Sarsfield into France. Their departure was long remembered in Ireland itself as 'the flight of the wild geese,' but the Irish regiments played a brilliant part in continental battles. After Fontenoy, where the Irish regiments alone proved equal to the task of arresting the terrible British column, George II. is reported to have said, 'Cursed be the laws which deprive me of such subjects.' And at Blenheim the Irish regiments seemed likely, at one moment, to play a part as great as at Fontenoy. They broke from Oberglauh upon the Prince of Holstein's column, tumbled it into ruin, took the Prince himself a prisoner, and hurled his men a mere wreck down the slope. For the moment Marlborough's centre was broken by that wild charge.

The Irish, with characteristic recklessness, were pursuing the routed Hanoverians, when Marlborough broke upon their flank with some squadrons of British cavalry. The Hanoverians themselves, a mere tumult of flying men, swept round the flank of a line of steady British foot, drawn across the line of their retreat, and this, too, opened a close and deadly fire on the Irish brigade as, breathless and disordered, it came down the slope. With horsemen on its flank, and unbroken infantry scourging it with fire in front, the Irish brigade was flung back in defeat to Oberglauh. Then came the great cavalry charge which decided the fight.

Marlborough resembled Hannibal in his use of cavalry for the deciding stroke in a great battle, and he had now no less than 8,000 horse, a long line of nodding plumes and gleaming swords, ready to launch on Tallard's centre. Behind were steady battalions of infantry, under the cover of whose fire the horsemen might reform if the attack failed. In front was the long slope, soft with grass and elastic to the stroke of the galloping hoofs, an ideal field for a great cavalry charge. Tallard had drawn up his cavalry in two lines, and had interlaced them with batteries of artillery and squares of infantry. These were drawn up slightly below the crest of the ridge, so as to exactly cover the summit with their fire.

At five o'clock Marlborough launched the great attack. Slowly at first, but gathering momentum as they advanced, the long lines of horsemen came on. The air was full of the clangour of scabbard on stirrup, the squadrons were just stretching themselves

out into a gallop, as they reached the summit of the ridge, when they were smitten by the fire of the French infantry and artillery. So deadly and close was the volley that the leading squadrons went down before it, and for a few wild minutes, under the canopy of whirling smoke, Marlborough's horsemen were in fierce confusion. That was the moment for a counterstroke! Tallard saw it, and gave the word to his cavalry to charge. They were more numerous than the British, yet they faltered. 'I saw an instant,' wrote the unfortunate Tallard afterwards, 'in which the battle was gained if——' his cavalry, in brief, had charged! But it failed to charge. The moment of possible victory vanished, and over the crest, with bent heads and wind-blown crests, the gleam of a thousand swords and the thunder of innumerable galloping hoofs, came the British cavalry.

Tallard's centre was broken as with the stroke of a thunderbolt! His infantry was swept into ruin, his cavalry hurled into disordered flight, and his army fairly cut in twain. His left wing fell back, fighting desperately; but his right, the *élite* of his army, was hopelessly shut up in Blenheim itself. As night fell Marlborough drew his lines closely round the village. Webb, with the Queen's regiment, blocked one avenue of escape, a cavalry force—one regiment of which consisted of Scots Greys—guarded the other. The French general in command of Blenheim, believing the situation to be desperate, ignobly abandoned his men and tried to swim his horse across the Danube, and was very properly drowned in the attempt. For a time the fight round Blenheim was furious. Part of the village took fire, and in the light of the red flames Frenchmen and Englishmen fought hand to hand with fiery valour. But with the centre destroyed, and the left wing in full retreat, the condition of Tallard's right, shut up in Blenheim, was hopeless, and 11,000 French infantry laid down their arms as prisoners of war. The great French army, 60,000 strong, composed in the main of veterans and familiar with victory, practically ceased to exist.

That battle changed the course of history. It destroyed the dream of a universal empire which Louis XIV. had cherished so long; it secured for the Anglo-Saxon race that opportunity of free development which has made the Empire of to-day possible.



*SIR JOHN MOORE IN '98.**A FORGOTTEN PAGE IN HISTORY.*

To examine the bloodstained records of '98 is no pleasant task, and duly to apportion blame to either side is extremely difficult.

Roughly speaking, the atrocities upon both sides may be taken as balancing one another. At the same time, fair allowance ought to be made for the position in which the British Government was placed, a position probably more dangerous than any in which the Empire had ever found itself. It seemed as if 'the silver streak' were playing false, as if our wooden walls were for the first time to be an instrument of destruction, and not of salvation. The Mutiny of the *Nore* was intimately connected with the Rebellion of '98. The illegal practice, initiated in 1795 by General Lord Carhampton, of sending suspected persons on board the fleet, and the Insurrection Act subsequently passed, had thrust into the Navy numbers of the disaffected, and no doubt the brutal severity with which sailors and soldiers were treated in those days did not tend to convert them to loyalty. And, consequent on the danger with which Great Britain was threatened, and the many demands upon her limited Army, it followed that the amount of regular troops in Ireland was very low—had, indeed, been reduced much below the number fixed by law. Hence reliance had to be placed upon the Militia, as a rule officered by men of a very low standard of efficiency and morality, with its rank and file in too many instances thoroughly disloyal in many of the Southern and Western regiments, and in some, at least, of the Northern imbued with furious party and religious animosities. The writer has been unable to trace in various narratives of the Rebellion the numbers of more than ten cavalry and nine infantry regiments of the Line,<sup>1</sup> and it seems doubtful if at the outbreak (May 23)

<sup>1</sup> Military readers may perhaps like to know their numbers: Dragoon Guards, 4th, 5th, 7th; Dragoons, 4th, 5th, 6th, 9th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th. Infantry, 2nd (Queen's), 6th (skeleton), 13th, 29th, 41st, 60th, 64th, 89th 100th.\* A battalion of each of the regiments of Guards appear to have left London on June 10, 1798, but did not land at Waterford till after Vinegar Hill had been fought on the 21st.

\* Gordon Highlanders, renumbered 92nd.

there were more than 5,000 regulars in Ireland. It must, however, be added that there were some excellent English and Scotch Fencible corps, such as the Durham Fencibles, a regiment which unquestionably decided the day at Arklow, on June 9, and probably saved Dublin from capture. After the back of the Rebellion was broken on Vinegar Hill (June 21), a force of 12,000 efficient English Militia, when the consent of Parliament had been obtained, was poured in through the month of July; and five regiments of the Line landed at Waterford on June 15, six days before Vinegar Hill was fought, and no doubt took part in the operations. In addition to the Irish Militia, and still more as the formidable nature of the struggle developed, the Government had to depend upon the Yeomanry, a force almost extemporised, intensely loyal, but animated with all the passions which, natural as they are, make civil war so horrible. Had there been an adequate force of regulars in Ireland, we should never have heard of the atrocities committed by the Ancient Britons (a Welsh cavalry corps commanded by Sir W. W. Wynn), Baron Ferdinand Hompesch's (Hessian) Dragoons, and some of the Yeomanry corps after the worst of the Rebellion was over.

However, it is not the purpose of the present paper to discuss the virtues or crimes of loyalist or rebel. They have all gone, long since, before a tribunal stricter and yet more merciful than man's. Its purpose is faintly and imperfectly to recall the image of the hero who looks upon us from the canvas of Sir Thomas Lawrence. It is a pleasure to contemplate the handsome face, the thoughtful brow, the searching eyes, and yet the almost feminine tenderness of the mouth, of the great general under whom Wellington himself, cold and ambitious as he was, was willing to have served, and who by his masterly, though, by no fault of his own, unfortunate march dislocated the plans of the mighty magician of war, baffling Napoleon himself.

Most probably very few, even among well-educated people, are aware that John Moore (not yet Sir John) had anything to do with the Irish Rebellion, or had ever been in Ireland at all. Probably numbers have read Mr. Lecky's full, and on the whole impartial, account of the Rebellion in the eighth volume of his History without discovering the fact, for it is only in a footnote (p. 158) that the name Sir John Moore is given, and that not prominently, while he is often referred to as Moore and General Moore.

The son of an eminent Scotch physician, the author of a once famous novel, 'Zeluco,' the grandson of a Presbyterian minister, he was only thirty-seven years of age in '98, and was already brigadier-general.<sup>1</sup> Sir Ralph Abercromby, the hero of Aboukir, had a high opinion of Moore, and when he was about to enter upon his brief and somewhat unfortunate tenure of the office of Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, selected Moore to accompany him. They landed together in Dublin on December 2, 1797, little more than five months before the outbreak of the Rebellion.

Moore was quartered at Bandon, co. Cork, in command of about 3,000 men, chiefly composed of Irish Militia, whom he found much disorganised, and in many instances disaffected. With his usual kindness and conciliatory disposition he forbade all party music, and ordered the troops to march to church without band-playing. Along with Abercromby he made a careful inspection of the coast defences in the south of Ireland, and found them exceedingly defective, and discipline in some corps loose in the extreme. As an example, it may be mentioned that they came across a corps of Yeomanry dressed in French uniform, for which, after a sharp reprimand, an odd apology was tendered by the commanding officer, that he was not aware that it was French!

Passing on to the actual Rebellion, when the English Government, after delays which were preventable, and which entailed frightful consequences of outrage and misery on both sides, despatched troops of the Line and Fencible regiments from across the Channel, General Gerard Lake, afterwards Lord Lake of Delhi and Laswarree, the Irish Commander-in-Chief, found himself in a position to draw a cordon of fire round the Wexford insurgents. They had fought with courage and persistency unknown to other parts of Ireland; except perhaps at Ballinahinch and Antrim, where the northern Presbyterians, though they soon became disgusted with the hideous and sectarian form that the insurrection had assumed in the south, vindicated the dogged valour of their Scottish ancestors, without the atrocious crimes which have cast a

<sup>1</sup> The child is father to the man. When he was only thirteen, his father took him abroad for education, when he and the Duke of Hamilton were placed under the care of a Swiss pastor at Geneva. His father writes home, 'Jack is really a pretty youth: his face is of a manly beauty, his person is strong, and his figure very elegant. He dances, fences, and rides with uncommon address. He is often operating in the fields, and informs me how he would attack Geneva, and shows me the weak parts of the fortification.'

terrible shade on Vinegar Hill, Scullabogue Barn, and Wexford Bridge.<sup>1</sup>

Moore was ordered to join Lake by forced marches from Cork, where his invalid and nervous superior, Sir James Stewart, would have detained him. With the light companies of his Militia regiments he joined General Johnson,<sup>2</sup> who had displayed such conspicuous courage in his defence of New Ross on June 5, and who probably saved the south of Ireland from universal insurrection. On June 18, Johnson and Moore advanced against a mass of rebels posted on Lacken Hill, near where Scullabogue Barn had stood. They were under the leadership of Father Philip Roche,<sup>3</sup> who had been appointed generalissimo *vice* poor, weak, well-meaning Bagenal Harvey, deposed. Roche had distinguished himself in the attack on Colonel Walpole's column, when that courtly and incompetent soldier fell into his fatal ambuscade on June 4, and in his brief command of the rebels displayed not only courage, but military talents of a high order. His army, surprised and compelled to retreat, divided itself into two parts, one of which moved on to the north-west to Vinegar Hill, while the other and larger portion, after fighting in which 'more than usual skill was shown by the rebels,' withdrew under Roche to the Three Rocks near Wexford. The whole armed population of the town was summoned by Roche in person to join him in an assault on Moore, now marching towards Taghmon<sup>4</sup> to

<sup>1</sup> The Wexford people are largely Anglo-Saxon by origin, as their names show.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson (afterwards Sir Henry, G.C.B., and colonel of the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers) is described by Lord Cornwallis as 'a wrong-headed blockhead,' but he was, all the same, a most gallant Irish soldier (born at Kilternan, near Dublin), and apparently a very competent general.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Caulfield, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ferns, who was in Wexford all through the Rebellion, gives a very bad account of the Roman Catholic clergy engaged in it. He says in his reply to Sir R. Musgrave (p. 6): 'The few renegade, abandoned, reprobate priests who perverted their ministry and joined or headed the Rebellion might have had influence over the rebels,' but not the parochial clergy; and again, in his letter to Archbishop Troy (Dublin)—Plowden (vol. iii. p. 717)—he gives a list of nine priests implicated, curiously enough omitting the famous Father Michael Murphy, who fell at Arklow. Of these only two had a fairly good character; the others had been suspended for various offences. Of Father Philip Roche he writes: He 'had been a proper man, would be useful (*sic*), but indulging in excess of drinking, and beginning to agitate, had become obnoxious and was removed' (from the curacy of Gorey). Of Father John Murphy (Boolavogue), another noted general, he writes, 'Ever giddy, but not noted for immorality.'

<sup>4</sup> Irish pronunciation is a fearful puzzle to the benighted Saxon. The Wexford Taghmon is pronounced Tāmūn, but there is a parish of the name of Taghmon in co. Westmeath which is pronounced Tackmon.

join in the combined assault on Vinegar Hill. This left the ill-fated Protestant prisoners at the mercy of an infuriated, fanatical, and to a considerable extent intoxicated, mob of country folk, who had fled into Wexford, many of them, no doubt, full of their own private wrongs and sufferings. The result was that in a three-hours' agony at least ninety-seven prisoners were on June 20 piked and flung into the Slaney, and Wexford Bridge ran so deep in blood that the horses of the monster Dixon, a seafaring man, and his sanguinary wife, the instigators of the atrocity, refused to advance.

Moore had with him about 1,000, or possibly 1,200 men, with six field-pieces of the Royal Artillery. The bulk of his forces consisted of light companies of Irish Militia, brought with him from his Bandon headquarters; but he had certainly the famous 60th Rifles, originally the Royal Americans, Major Duncan Heyward's regiment in the 'Last of the Mohicans.' He had also some of the infamous Hompesch Dragoons.

Suddenly a great cloud of dust was seen, and the rebels appeared, advancing in considerable force. Moore was no Walpole. Unexpected as the attack was, he was prepared for it. He had already reconnoitred the ground. He was eminent for this characteristic of a careful general, and had remarkably keen eyes. He sent the 60th, his Yäger Riflemen (as they are called in his *Life*),<sup>1</sup> to skirmish in advance, placed his artillery on an eminence, and drew up his light troops on each side of the road. The rebels rushed upon his right with great resolution, in spite of his artillery fire from the commanding position, and his men, all probably inexperienced in war, who did not relish their baptism of fire at the hands of the expert wildfowl-shooters of the sea coast, and who dreaded the pike, a most formidable weapon at close quarters, began to waver. Moore threw himself from his horse, leaped over a high ditch on the right of the road, restored the spirit of his troops, and at their head drove the rebels down a hill and over Gough's Bridge. After achieving this success he was informed that his left was seriously compromised. Roche, who was 'a born general,' as some military men declared who conversed with him before his execution on Wexford Bridge, had made a desperate effort to turn his left. Moore was unwilling to leave his post on the right, as the rebels threatened to repass the bridge, and accord-

<sup>1</sup> I have seen a letter from the War Office stating that they landed in April 1798, and were all foreigners, hence perhaps the name.

ingly sent a reinforcement of infantry with a field-piece. But Major Anderson hurried up with startling news that the day was nearly lost. Now was the time for Moore to prove the sterling stuff he was made of. He galloped to the left, and found to his astonishment all in confusion, Yägers (60th), infantry and dragoons, 'clubbed' together, falling back in what would have soon been a panic flight, the enemy with their formidable pikes close at hand. He rallied his men, drawing them to each side of the road, charged and drove back the foe, 'not without the loss of several gallant officers and a number of brave men.'

Such was the action of Foulke's Mill, 'the best-fought battle upon both sides,' according to the Rev. James Gordon, the impartial historian of the Rebellion, a Wexford Rector of the time.

It is said that Roche intended to have attacked again in the night, and with fair chances of success, had not he seen the 2nd (Queen's) and the 29th Regiments, under Lord Dalhousie, afterwards a distinguished lieutenant of Wellington's in the Peninsula, advancing from the direction of the coast. It is stated that they only landed that morning from England.

This severe action lasted from about 3 P.M. till near 8 P.M. on the 20th. After their repulse, Roche and his men retreated to their position on the Three Rocks. It was too late in the evening to pursue, even if Moore had been strong enough to do so; and on the 21st he resumed his interrupted march towards Vinegar Hill, to take his appointed place, no doubt, in assisting his chief, Johnson, in the attack on Enniscorthy. But on his march momentous reports reached him. He heard of the atrocious massacre on Wexford Bridge upon the day before, and that there was the greatest danger of the many Protestants still in the hands of the rebels being murdered by the thousands, infuriated by their defeat in the early morning upon Vinegar Hill, who were pouring into Wexford; that Lake's soldiers, who were in hot pursuit, would in that event slay indiscriminately, and that the town would be set on fire. He took a bold step. Brave and humane as he was all his too short life, he deviated from his orders, as none, perhaps, except himself among the Royal generals would have dared to do, and moved promptly upon Wexford.<sup>1</sup> To do Lake justice, he

<sup>1</sup> A characteristic story is told of him on this march. With the care which has been noticed, he climbed up on a bank with two of his staff to examine the country. Looking down, they saw in the ditch 'six stout rebels lurking.' One of his officers foolishly jumped down, and was rewarded for his rashness by a pike wound. Moore actually ordered his soldiers not to fire, and let the six

warmly approved of this conduct, as appears from his despatch from Wexford to Lord Castlereagh dated June 22. Encamping above the town, and probably not trusting his ill-regulated forces, he sent in during the evening the whole or a part of the 2nd (Queen's) to secure it, Captain Boyd, the member for the town, having, with or without orders from Moore, entered it with his Yeomanry shortly before, to the unspeakable relief of the Loyalists, who were indeed at death's door.

Before passing from the black Wexford tragedy it only remains to tell the sad story of Matthew Keogh, or Keogh, the rebel Governor of Wexford, and to describe Moore's generous efforts to save him from Lake's perhaps just retribution. Keogh was a Protestant, but, like many of that faith who were more or less concerned in the Rebellion, was strongly imbued with the principles of the French Revolution. He had served in the ranks, though of good family, and having distinguished himself in the American War, had risen to the position of captain in the 6th, or 65th, Regiment.<sup>1</sup> When the Rebellion broke out he was in receipt of half-pay, though he had been deprived of the commission of the peace some time before. He was a man of good fortune, married to a wealthy wife, well connected, most popular, very eloquent, and of great personal beauty. The use that he made of his terrible position as Governor, with infuriated multitudes surging around him, no matter whether he sought it or whether it was thrust on him, is, as Mr. Lecky writes, 'one of the few bright spots in the dark and shameful story.'

Lord Kingsborough (afterwards Earl of Kingston, colonel of the hated North Cork Militia, who, trying to rejoin his regiment, had been captured in a boat with two of his officers) and several others gave evidence before the court-martial of his unfailing humanity, and of his successful efforts to save their lives at the risk of his own; and even Sir R. Musgrave, though in the somewhat stilted language of the end of last century, is constrained to acknowledge his very able and manly defence before the court-martial, during the whole of which he was 'cool and deliberate, and so eloquent and pathetic as to excite the most tender emotions in the breasts of his auditors.' Moore, who was present, was so profoundly moved in the depths of his affectionate nature that

escape. Lake very likely would have pronounced this to be quixotic humanity, but it was like Moore.

<sup>1</sup> Musgrave says one, Plowden the other.



he ordered the officer in command to delay the execution, and ran at the top of his speed to Lake, to entreat of him to respite the prisoner. But no! Lake was of sterner stuff, and declared that he had ample proofs of Keogh's complicity in the Rebellion. No doubt he was greatly influenced by the fact that he held in his hands the fate of a half-pay officer of the King, and refused. So poor Mat Keogh, attended to the last by the excellent rector of Wexford, Mr. Elgee, whose life he had saved, passed to his death on Wexford Bridge, in company with Father Philip Roche, drunken, truculent, dauntless, sullen, and probably humane. Unflinching to the last, he was hung from the ironwork of the newly erected bridge, his head cut off according to the barbarous usage of the day, and his body, as was the case with his other companions in tribulation, flung into the Slaney. His head was fixed upon a pike in front of the Court House, and on either side, a few days after, the heads of Colclough and Harvey. Sir Jonah Barrington, who came to Wexford shortly after the Rebellion, notes the strange fact that while Colclough's and Harvey's heads were but as black lumps, that of Keogh was unchanged. 'His comely and respect-inspiring face (except the pale hue, scarcely to be called livid) was the same as in life.' In his death speech he himself told, and thereby moved his audience to tears, how his aged brother died. He, too, had served his King in the Army; but, unlike his brother, he remained loyal to the last, and in sore affliction at the evil course into which Matthew had turned, and when he heard of the fearful massacre of the 20th, begged to be carried to his bed, being unable from infirmity to move; and on the following morning, before the distant guns from Vinegar Hill began their ominous roar, contrived to crawl into his brother's room, got hold of a pair of pistols, and tragically ended his life.

Another pathetic incident of the Rebellion is the fate of Cornelius Grogan, an infirm, almost half-witted, but very wealthy Protestant country gentleman, of whom Barrington says that he was 'no more a rebel than his brothers, who signalised themselves in battle as loyalists,' and of whom one, indeed, Captain Grogan Knox, fell at Arklow at the head of his Yeomanry corps. It would furnish a striking subject to a painter to depict 'the feeble old man, with his long white hair streaming over his shoulders, wrapped in flannels, and tottering on his crutches painfully, but very placidly, to the gallows. Like Sir Edward Crosbie, he had an old and faithful servant, who stole his head from

the pike on which it was transfixed, and secured for it a Christian burial.'

Lake returned to Dublin speedily, where he was badly wanted as Commander-in-Chief. His place was taken by General Hunter, who in his painful duty 'acted with humanity and skill.' Besides Moore, other Royalist officers have been noted for their humanity to the wretched people who, innocent or guilty, rebels or not, were enduring a fearful, and sometimes, indeed, an iniquitous retribution. Such were the Marquis of Huntly,<sup>1</sup> with his newly raised famous Gordon Highlanders (the old 92nd), then the 100th Regiment, whose conduct was exemplary in their treatment of the peasantry; Colonel Skerrett, who had fought so well at Arklow, and who was so distinguished in the Peninsula afterwards, and his Durham Fencibles; the young Earl of Tyrone; Colonel Gascoigne, commanding the Coldstream Guards; Lord Ancram, General Grose, and Colonel Fowlis.

Moore followed Lake to Dublin, and was soon appointed to an important command, with his headquarters at Blessington, charged with the pacification of the County Wicklow. There, among the mountains with which the county abounds, a guerilla warfare was continued for some months under Hacket and Holt. Hacket was a ruthless fellow, who broke away from Holt because he would not allow indiscriminate plunder. Holt was a Protestant, a large farmer, whose house had been burned on mere suspicion. In fact, he states in his Memoirs that his sympathies were on the other side, but, driven from house and home, he had no refuge but the mountains. He had with him many of Father Philip Roche's dispersed 'Army;' amongst them the remains of the redoubtable Shilmalier wildfowl-shooters, 'with their long guns and deadly aim,' deserters from no less than thirteen Militia regiments, who knew the scant mercy they would obtain, and peasants whose houses had been burned by the Yeomen. Moore did his best, in the genuine pity he felt for the misery that he saw all around—outrages on the one side provoking worse upon the other in a terrible circle of crime—to induce the country people to submit, surrender their arms, and return to their peaceful avocations. He was accustomed, we are told in his Life, to speak kindly to them, and no doubt his position at the head of several thousand men,

<sup>1</sup> The fifth and last Duke of Gordon, brother to the Duchess of Richmond who gave the famous Brussels Ball on June 15, 1815, and whose daughter, who danced at the ball, and is said to have buckled on 'the Duke's' sword after it, still survives in extreme old age (Lady Louisa Tighe, of Woodstock, co. Kilkenny).

armed with tremendous powers, added force to his arguments. But he could also act with promptness and just severity. He devised an elaborate system for the subjugation of the rebel bands, which proved effectual, and ultimately led to the surrender of Holt, who escaped with his life, was transported to Botany Bay, and was permitted after a few years to return to Ireland. The system was of this kind. He divided his forces into four parts, each in touch with the other, and thus, gradually enclosing the rebels in a huge drag net, cleared the country in three weeks. But not without injury to himself. Sharing his soldiers' hardships, and lying on the wet ground at night with no other covering than 'his martial cloak around him,' as in death, so in life, the warrior took his rest, and contracted a fever, from which he suffered for some time. Lord Cornwallis had so high an opinion of him that he sent down from Dublin his own physician to attend him.

It is not necessary to follow him in the remainder of his career in Ireland. He was not in action again, though he commanded a considerable force under Lord Cornwallis, and aided in the capture of Humbert's gallant little army on September 8 at Ballinamuck, co. Leitrim.

In 1799 he was invited by his former chief in Ireland, Sir Ralph Abercromby, to accompany him in what proved the disastrous campaign in Holland, under the incompetent Duke of York. He also served under Abercromby in the Egyptian campaign, and so distinguished himself that he was created a Knight of the Bath. All the world knows of the glorious ending of his stainless life, when in the hour of victory, terminating a necessary but disastrous retreat, he, like James Wolfe on the heights of Quebec, lived long enough to hear that all was well with his army. But perhaps all the world does not know how he retained to the last the same thoughtful, considerate, loving spirit that he had manifested in his forty-eight years of human life. Fearfully mangled by the round shot that struck him full on the left breast, he was the same John Moore that we have found him in '98. 'Are my aides-de-camp all safe?' was his inquiry. Colonel Anderson, who was on his staff at the fierce fight of Foulke's Mill, as we have seen, had to signal with his finger for silence, for one of them—Captain Burrard<sup>1</sup>—had fallen. 'I hope the

<sup>1</sup> Son of Sir Harry Burrard, who forbade Wellesley to advance after Vimiera.

people of England will be satisfied. I hope my dear country will do me justice. Anderson, you will see my friends at home; tell them everything. My dear mother! my dear mother!' and then at last he broke down, and, evidently unable to trust himself further, tried to speak of Hope (afterwards Sir John, and finally Lord Hopetoun), who succeeded him in command. The last words that passed his dying lips were a message to Lady Hester Stanhope, the niece of Pitt, afterwards so famous for her eccentricity, as her father had been before her. To her, to whom he is said to have been deeply attached, if not engaged, he sent his dying remembrances by her brother, one of his aides-de-camp, and then passed peacefully into the presence of his God. Strange that one of the noblest lyrics in our world-wide language, the work of an Irish clergyman, should enshrine in immortal verse the memory of the hero who helped so largely to suppress the rebellion of '98; while another, almost as noble, written more than fifty years ago, by an Irishman also, who is still living, though we dare not draw aside the thin veil that hides its authorship, should give (it may be) an exaggerated glory to 'the Memory of the Dead.' Their country, at any rate, is proud of the authors. 'Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,' and 'Who fears to speak of Ninety Eight?' are works of inspiration in which not alone Ireland, but all the great English-speaking world, may well rejoice.

ROBERT STAVELEY.

## THE ETCHINGHAM LETTERS.

## V.

*From Miss Elizabeth Etchingham, 83 Hans Place, London, S.W., to Sir Richard Etchingham, Bart., Tolcarne, Much Buckland, Wessex.*

DEAR, DEAREST RICHARD,—Thank you very much for the vegetables, but, oh, the irony of life. The vegetables waited to come till a time when my spirit refused to feed upon Wessex beetroot or to find solace and refreshment in a Tolcarne Brussels-sprout.

I am about to issue a writ to inquire into the state of Sir Augustus Pampesford's mind. You will say that the proceeding is not premature when I tell you that since Monday my time has been fully occupied in refusing the proffered hand and heart of the honest man who condones mental inferiority for the sake of respectable birth. And there seems no end to the business. What am I to do? I have been driven to hint that I would rather—so low are my tastes—tramp the country selling baskets than live or die as Lady Pampesford of Pampesford-Royal; but nothing penetrates, and notes still come on the thickest, glossiest paper emblazoned with the Pampesford crest and motto (crest—a crowned peacock, motto—'I lead') in the When-you-have-duly-considered-the-matter strain. 'An alliance between two ancient and honourable families,' 'The houses of Etchingham and Pampesford'—no, 'Pampesford and Etchingham.' It is more than I can cope with, and I beg and implore you to write to him yourself and tell him—tell him that I am a Katherine Shrew sort of person; that I am a certified lunatic, and only at large for the Easter vacation and to help my family settle themselves in London (the very task for a lunatic); that we are not the real Etchinghams, after all, of Tolcarne, Wessex, and Heddingley, East Anglia, with a forbear who represented his county in Edward II.'s Parliament, but mere mushrooms, who took the name and arms of the original stock. Tell him, too, that though I accepted a copy of 'The Armorial Families of the Universe,' and wrote and thanked him for the book before I cut the pages (a plan I learnt from you, when doubtful as to the matter to be found therein), I did not look upon the

acceptation of the volume as a preamble to marriage with the man. Tell him that I am married already: so I am—to a memory.

You see I have no one here to whom to speak of this absurd affair. Good Harry's fidelity of nature extends to his jokes, and did this subject for ridicule reach him, he would not have done with chaffing till Doomsday. Experience, in fact, teaches that the longer he has a joke about him the more valuable and serviceable it becomes. And did I confide in Laura, not only would she weep over me as I broke the news, but for days after I should see tears gathering in her eyes whenever she looked in my direction. Laura has always held tears to be the fit environment of marriage engagements, and even tidings of a Pampesford proposal would unnerve her at once.

*Later.*—Your letter has just come. Would it be judicious or not, under the circumstances, to make over the baronite-lore to Sir Augustus? Were my heart as bad as my temper I should be inclined to wish that he would take to a 'Roly-Poly Cycle' himself. Doctors no longer required, only gravediggers. I never saw a man who looked to me as if he would, if he could, so thoroughly enjoy his own funeral as does Sir Augustus. I am not really brutal enough to desire his removal by death, but he is making my life a burden to me at present, and I think Jem's ingenious friend might be less usefully employed than in producing an apocryphal Book of Job for my recitation.

How these days that seem to have something of spring about them make me wish to shake the dust of London off my feet and take tickets to Much Buckland for poor country-loving Tracy and myself. I long to see the blowing of the daffodils, the Wessex 'Lent-roses,' in Little Buckland meadow, and the flitting to and fro of the long-tailed tits, to whom the alders by the river serve as withdrawing-rooms. (Birds are conservative, I think, in their vocabulary.) The first breath of spring when it reaches one in a town is depressing. It is at least to me, and gives me, with its suggestion of the unattainable, a doleful, Amiel-melancholy. But stay here I must, for Laura cannot be left. If you ever see in your sister any sign of this inconvenient inability, please crush it out at once. People who cannot be left and who, therefore, must be provided with constant companionship levy a rather hard tax upon their relations. But Laura is made so, and I do not feel it my duty to discipline her out of her faults. It is impossible to

persuade her to leave home herself during the rheumatism *régime*. She is starved, she complains, in her friends' houses for want of proper food, poisoned by the strength of their tea, and blown out of window by their draughts. (Other people's draughts are draughts; our own are ventilation all the world over, you may have noticed.) So here I am, and here I must remain.

Laura now breakfasts in her own room—the habit is one to be encouraged—and when letters come by the first post I am not bombarded with questions; so write, write, write, write, Richard. Do not fail me in this ridiculous Pampesford affair.

Your loving Sister,

ELIZABETH.

P.S.—I have the blues. Be very amiable when you write.

# VI.

*Sir Richard Etchingham to Miss Elizabeth Etchingham.*

MY DEAR ELIZABETH,—This is the most enormous joke: don't think me unfeeling, but read on and understand why you can afford to take Sir Augustus with levity. Have I ever seen him? I rather think not. Certainly I have not seen 'The Armorial Families of the Universe,' but I suspect you will find in that great work a certain vagueness about the circumstances attending the succession of the great Pampesford family in its present branch. For now I know what I know, and what you shall know in a few lines more. In short—but I think the method of all female gossips and most male pleaders, namely, to begin from the beginning in strict order of time, will be best in this case. You know old Mrs. Tallis who lives by herself at Little Buckland—at least you know about her—and how she has wanted for years to negotiate an exchange of two little odd-shaped corners of our respective properties to round off our boundaries, and how in my father's time Laura, for no reason she would assign except that she thought Mrs. Tallis's cap not suitable to her years, would not let him hear of it, whereby such slender relations as Tolcarne ever had with Fuchsia Dene were suspended; or rather all this is better known to you than to me. Now you may be guessing (with swift feminine skipping of all the intermediate diplomatic events and matters of inducement) that Mrs. Tallis has a niece with prior claims on Sir Augustus, or is even entitled by pre-



contract, and prepared with all the terrors of a breach of promise action, to lead him to the altar herself; and, indeed, it would be no more than proper dramatic justice—but it is not that. A shame to keep you in suspense, you say? Pray how often have you told me that men always spoil a story by leaving out all the beginning and letting out the end in the middle? So please attend to the real story, which is coming.

It seemed to me that Mrs. Tallis had been rather badly treated, but, as an old Political, I was afraid of starting an official correspondence without knowing the ground a little; you see the old lady might have fired off her accumulated store of temper in some form that would have made further approaches hopeless. So I betook myself to our excellent parson Follett, with whom I have now an understanding as good as an alliance in most things that concern the two Bucklands, and authorised him to convey my expressions of personal regret, and assure Mrs. Tallis that, without discussing past unpleasantness in which I had no share, and which I had no means of preventing, I should be happy to reconsider the affair in a neighbourly spirit. At the date of my last letter the parson had seen Mrs. Tallis, and she said very little, so I did not mention it to you then, not knowing whether anything would come of it. However, two days later I get a very polite note wishing me joy of being at home for good, hoping to be out and about and call at Tolcarne when weather is warmer, though the Buckland hill is hard work for a small pony carriage; finally, asking me if I will not call at Fuchsia Dene next Sunday and take a dish of tea without ceremony. Not a word of business, or boundaries, or Laura. Mrs. Tallis has not lived sixty—or is it seventy?—odd years for nothing. So that looked promising, and I went.

Mrs. Tallis was as gracious as might be in a pretty old-fashioned way, and gave me the best of tea—you know my weakness that way. She wanted to know all about the Indian Empire, including a second cousin once removed, who had been on railway work in Travancore about ten years ago; whereby I had humbly to point out to her that Travancore is a good deal farther from Rajputana than Little Buckland from Thursborough, and yet we don't know everybody in Thursborough; as also, one house and one division at Eton are far enough from one another to disable Arthur from giving Mrs. Ginx full information about her nephew in the fourth form who has just come to Poole's, a house of which, as it happens, they don't think much at Lytewell's. Luckily

Mrs. Tallis took no offence, and we maffled and talked on. Did you not once tell me, long ago, family history was Mrs. Tallis's strong point? Anyhow—and most luckily—it is. We came somehow to the grievances of the baronets, and I mentioned Sir Augustus Pampesford as among those who were making, in my opinion, an absurd fuss. 'Pampesford, indeed!' cried Mrs. Tallis, 'he is as much Pampesford as you and I are De Coucy: not that you or I, Sir Richard, have any call to want anybody else's name.' And out comes the whole story, I little thinking how useful it was to be to us, but taking it in most attentively, both because it was part of my business to appear amused and because it really amused me. You shall understand, then, in brief, that Isaac Pfandersfurth of Bremen, merchant, transferred his principal seat of business to England some little time before the French Revolution, and prospered. This Isaac had a son, Solomon, who increased the paternal wealth and became acceptable, doubtless for solid reasons, to H.R.H. the Prince Regent. Now at that time the Pampesford estates were encumbered, the family on the point of extinction, and one fine day the world learnt that Solomon Pfandersfurth, Esq., had become the owner of Pampesford Hall (it was not 'Royal' then). Then it was put about that a younger branch of the Pampesfords had gone crusading against the heathen Prussians in the fourteenth century, perhaps in company with Chaucer's knight, and had left representatives in Germany whose name had been Germanised for convenience. Presently it became known that Solomon Pampesford, Esq., formerly Pfandersfurth, had, with all proper licences, assumed the name and arms of Pampesford; and lastly, after a decent interval, his Majesty King George IV. was pleased to create Sir Solomon Pampesford, of Pampesford-Royal, a baronet of the United Kingdom. Sir Solomon, Mrs. Tallis added, perpetuated the testimony of his Englishry and orthodoxy by building a church in the most approved style of early nineteenth-century sham Gothic just outside the park gates, and becoming a strict game preserver and an indifferent shot—an example which, it is said, has been piously followed by his descendants. We have all read these things in our classical novelists, and it seems they sometimes happen.

Well, thereupon I enclose you a letter for Sir Augustus, which you may close and forward if approved, making sure that the address, of which I am a little doubtful, is quite correct. If you think it too risky I will alter it, but I suppose you are not over

anxious to keep up the acquaintance. May I trust that the blues are dispersed?

As I was taking leave of Mrs. Tallis after this long talk, of which she had done most, I asked her in a by-the-way manner if she remembered that odd three-cornered piece of our east hams that runs into her land, and said it had occurred to me in walking round that it might be for our mutual convenience to have a little adjustment of boundaries on that side. Mrs. Tallis answered that she had talked enough for one afternoon, and had no wits left for business, but she would be pleased to think it over and let me know. Then she caught sight of Margaret on her bicycle, who had been round on errands and came back to convoy me. We had meant Mrs. Tallis not to see it the first time; in fact, Margaret was quite sure it would be shocking to her. But she was only pleased and amused, and we rode off with a blessing waved after us from the porch. If you have any interest left for my small affairs, know that I had actually ridden, with exceeding caution, down the Little Buckland hill. Margaret says I begin to do her credit. Jem may be here any day now, and will perhaps condescend to put some touches to our education. There is a shade of something amiss about Margaret these last days; she looks worried at times, and I don't think it is the housekeeping or anxiety for her or my improvement in cycling. No doubt she will tell me in good time if it is really anything.

The Folletts are expecting one Shipley, a very learned medievalist from the Record Office, to spend a few days at the Vicarage, and examine some documents in the neighbourhood, or in the Thursborough archives, I am not sure which. They have hardly met Mr. Shipley, though Mr. Follett knows his work well. Margaret and I are to help to entertain him. We are all rather in fear of the learned man, and try to comfort one another with the hope that he may not turn out altogether too weighty, or otherwise very formidable.

Your affectionate Brother,

RICHARD ETCHINGHAM.

[ENCLOSURE IN NO. VI.]

*Sir Richard Etchingham to Sir Augustus Pampesford.*

DEAR SIR AUGUSTUS PAMPESFORD,—My sister has communicated to me, as head of the family, the substance of the very

flattering proposal you have been pleased to make to her, as well as of her own views already expressed to you. She is, as I need not point out, fully competent in age and otherwise to form her own judgment, and I must add, having known her from our childhood, that nothing I could say would be likely to affect her judgment in such a matter. It is not for me to indulge my own feelings by confirming your estimate of her qualities, and still less to cast doubt on your discernment by pretending to dispute it. However, as your ancestor, Sir Solomon, the first baronet, is reported to have said to some one who presumed to censure his full and final adoption of English customs, shekels are silver, but sovereigns are golden. I cannot bring myself to think that it will be long before your golden talents and advantages find in some other quarter metal as attractive and more congenial.

Believe me, dear Sir Augustus,

Yours very faithfully,

RICHARD ETCHINGHAM.

Sir Augustus Pampesford, Bart., &c. &c.,  
Pampesford-Royal.

## VII.

*From Miss Elizabeth Etchingham to Sir Richard Etchingham.*

DEAR, DEAREST DICKORY,—Why are not postmen who drop letters into wrong letter-boxes decapitated on the spot, to prevent like wrongdoing in future? Why if postmen drop letters into wrong letter-boxes, is it always the wrong letters that are thus consigned? Why was it not the black-edged appeal from a clergyman for funds to repair a north-country church, of which I had never heard, or the splendidly gilded and blazoned offer from a money-lender to Harry of the mines of Golconda, or the bill for Laura's Sunday bonnet, or the invitation to Cynthia to dance at Vivian-End in Easter week, that the folly of the postman delayed in transmission rather than your Pampesford epistle? I will tell you—because man, and woman also, is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, and because desperately wicked is the heart of postmen.

You see, thanks to this postman folly and wickedness, I never had the letter, which should have come at breakfast time, till the moment when Turnbull brought it into the drawing-room ostentatiously laid upon the tea-tray and all unsheltered from Laura's eyes. Never trust shortsighted eyes not to see, nor deaf

ears not to hear. Blind eyes and deaf ears are freakish things, and will play you false if you put your trust in them. Laura saw in a moment from whom the document stamped with the Tolcarne postmark came, and before I could forge a reason for letting it lie unopened, Turnbull ushered in no other than Sir Augustus himself. Really Laura's policy of the open door has much to answer for. (As is known to you, we are never allowed the protection of a 'Not at home,' unless we are down with an infectious disease, in bed, or in the street, but sit at the receipt of custom the day through at the mercy of all the unemployed in Christendom.) To fill up the cup of my woes, our stepmother frustrated my attempts to leave the room, and, alas, I can't take flight through these French windows into the harbour of the shrubbery as, in such a predicament, would have been my course at Tolcarne. 'Pour out the tea, dear Elizabeth,' was my order; 'if it stands too long the tannin will ruin our digestions.' Better be tanned to shoe leather, I thought, than retain one's digestion in Sir Augustus's company; but this reflection I had to keep to myself. 'And now let us hear the Tolcarne news,' Laura persisted; 'I am sure Sir Augustus will forgive my impatience when he knows that it is a fortnight since we heard a word from our old home.' (I have, you will observe, treated your communications as private.) Alas, alack, from first to last the luck was against me, for, when forced to open the letter I proceeded to break the seal, up leapt Trelawney with a robust purr to my knee and, jerking my elbow as he leapt, jerked out the enclosure, address upwards, to Sir Augustus's feet. Alack, alas, the envelope I saw was open and probably meant for my perusal before delivery. Means of escape, however, if not of victory, were at hand, and sweeter than the song of nightingale was the sound at that moment of Harry's hoarse shout of 'Elizabeth!' echoing through the house. And never was man's call more quickly responded to.

Harry, poor fellow, has a cold in his head, and, in passing, I may mention that far less to-do would he make were a gun-shot wound his complaint. 'I could not go to the drawing-room after you,' he explained, 'as Turnbull told me that ass, Pampesford, is there again; and I want to know if the time hasn't come round to inhale this beastly eucalyptus stuff.' So your letter was read whilst the bath-towel that enveloped brother and inhalation shrouded Harry's proud head: and read to the accompaniment of the sufferer's sighs and piteous appeals to be told if 'it isn't long

enough.' And yet Harry without a qualm would have stormed Dargai's heights, and anything else really formidable that you like.

As to the Pampesford antecedents, I am not surprised by what you tell me. The glitter points to an origin of the sort. I do wonder what the enclosed missive said. It is pretty sure to be effectual, for you are rightly held to be an effectual person, Sir.

*Later.*—And what do you think? When—Sir Augustus safely out of the house—I went back to the drawing-room, there I found Laura bathed in tears and declaring herself to be most deeply hurt by our secrecy, our duplicity, our all things imaginable that are bad, in concealing from her matters that concerned our very heart's blood. Sir Augustus had evidently let her know that he has spent his time during the last fortnight in offering what I have not the sense to accept. I fear that poor Laura's feelings are really injured, and, of course, *à la mode* of Laura, she turns her injuries into an instance of disrespect to our father's memory, who put her 'in the place of his wife.' Her sympathies, I need not tell you, are entirely with Sir Augustus, who is, she says, 'a very good-hearted man.' I dare say he is good-hearted, but it is useless to argue with her that the absence of brutality in his nature does not establish his right to marry any unwilling woman he may fix upon as a desirable wife.

*Thursday.*—Laura still wears a stone-wall face, and treats me with a sort of offended-governess air, as if I were a child in disgrace. 'I am not in your confidence, Elizabeth, and therefore am not surprised to see you wearing your grey gown instead of your black, or buying new shoe-laces without consulting me.' As an olive branch I have written to beg Mrs. Carstairs to come to tea this afternoon, and I shall retire to my room early in the entertainment, so as to give the aggrieved one a good opportunity of complaining of me. What more to please can woman do?

Harry's cold, I am happy to tell you, is better, and he is not to die of it. It is an acknowledged thing indeed that his sneezes will not land him this time in Hades, and he talks of going north for a week at Easter, a-fishing. The Vivians have invited Cynthia, also Stephen, to stay with them at Vivian-End, for a hunt ball next week. Vivian-End, you know, is Mr. Biggleswade's cure, and I am thinking of packing up Trelawney with Cynthia's dancing frock as Biggleswade defence. I must not again forget what I have intended to tell you before, which is that Stephen would very much like an invitation to Tolcarne. He is writing the life

of some west-country mariner for the 'Naval Notabilities' series, and thinks that you or Mr. Follett can afford him some valuable information on Wessex sailor-lore. Mrs. Vivian affronted him by inquiring if Noah was to be included in the 'Naval Notabilities' series.

It is not for the first time that Jim's expected arrival has given Margaret a worried look; but if there is anything to be told to you she will tell it herself.

I think I know the Folletts' expected guest, Mr. Shipley. Is he not brother to my dear Alice Newton? I think so. The Newtons have taken a house in Sloane Street for three months, and I shall see something of her, I hope. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Ware, came to see us the other day, a woman devoid of understanding, who thinks it is time that Alice, whose child died a year ago, 'roused herself.' Prolonged grief bores the onlookers. We are all allowed to be unhappy for a little while, you know, but then we have to 'begin to get over it.' Poor Alice, I think she found in her child consolation for her marriage. (It was Mrs. Ware who, in Indian days, finding that some one she considered a black sheep was not tabooed by Bombay, pleased Harry by her inquiry, 'What is the use of being respectable if such people are to be asked to Government House?')

Don't forget that it is 'expected of you' to invite Charles and Minnie in the course of time to Tolcarne. I am really sorry for Minnie, *à propos* of the treatment she receives from her mother in the matter of 'Only a Woman's Heart;' and I feel that we must all be very good-natured about it, and make the most of our liking—or, rather, the least of our disliking—of the book, to make up. When I went to see Mrs. Vivian the other day, I was followed into the house by Minnie, who came in quite excited and breathless over a most polite newspaper notice of the novel. 'My dear Minnie, these ridiculous reviews are either written by people who have not read the book, or who know me,' was Mrs. Vivian's comment. 'And now I come to think of it, Hugo Ennismore writes in the "Minerva," and there is nothing foolish that he would not say or do to please me,' &c. &c. This was hard on Minnie, and she was all tears and tremors in a moment. Blanche, the pretty younger sister, is much happier in her relations with her mother. She laughs when attacked, and Mrs. Vivian receives the laughter as a tribute to her humour, and is appeased. From Mrs. Vivian, on the same occasion, I got the



latest intelligence in printers' blunders. The printer of a report of some philanthropic work in which she is interested turned 'L'Union Internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille' into 'L'Union Internationale des *Arries* de la Jeune Fille.' What do you think of that?

Whilst Laura was confessing my sins to Mrs. Carstairs this afternoon, I read some chapters of Earle's 'Microcosmography'—the new reprint. Perhaps I am right, perhaps I am wrong; but, wrong or right, I prefer the portrait gallery of Theophrastus to that of Earle, and that of old Fuller in his 'Holy and Profane State' to either. For your guidance, as an elder brother, I might make over to you an extract from the character of 'The Elder Brother' in 'The Holy State':

'He relieveth his distressed kinred, yet so, as he continues them in their calling. Otherwise, they will all make his house their hospitall, his kinred their calling. When one being as Husbandman challenged kinred of Robert Grosthead Bishop of Lincoln and thereupon requested favour of him to bestow an office on him, "Cousen" (quoth the Bishop) "if your cart be broken I'll mend it; if your plough be old, I'll give you a new one, and seed to sow your land, but an Husbandman I found you and an Husbandman I'll leave you." It is better to ease poore kinred in their Profession than to ease them from their Profession.' Very, very true.

Wars and rumours of wars: what will come of it all? I pity those who sit in kings' and presidents' and prime ministers' places—

One would have lingering wars with little cost;  
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;  
A third man thinks, without expense at all,  
By guileful fair words peace may be obtained.

So it was, so it is, and so, I suppose, it will always be.

Do not dock me when you write of the Tolcarne news, of the Tolcarne sayings and doings. They throw up the window and freshen the air of the room (Ventilation, not draught). Is Enticknap, as usual, grudging growing-room to everything but a cabbage, and hungering—I trust futilely—to dig the borders? Don't let him. If he had his way he would destroy every vestige of blossoming vegetation. The good creature confuses a Sahara and a flower-garden, and all that he does not cut down he holds it his privilege to dig up. I wonder if Merlin, poor old dog, still, every fine morning, takes a sun-bath on the terrace? I liked to see him

throw himself down before the big myrtle with a sigh of reposeful content. And tell me if the cocks and hens flourish and if you now are called upon to find names for the infants of the poultry-yard. Great was Enticknap's embarrassment last year when Margaret gave her own name and Cynthia's to two of the chickens. With 'Miss Cynthia the cock' and 'Miss Margrot the pullet' he finally solved the etiquette difficulty.

My *salutations empressées* to you and to everything at Tolcarne, and those of Trelawney to the birds—robin, linnet, thrush. Much does he wish, horrid fellow, that it were for him to devastate the nests this spring. Good-bye, good-bye.

Your affectionate Sister,

ELIZABETH.

#### VIII.

*Sir Richard Etchingham to Miss Elizabeth Etchingham.*

MY DEAR ELIZABETH,—Laura may go to Dúzakh, which is in the Persian the opposite of Bihisht; and if you don't know what those two places are you may guess. Seriously, can you go on living with her much longer? There is a point where self-respect, after a fair trial, sets limits to every social duty. However, Sir Augustus's exit is assured, and I shall not break my heart because it was a little more abrupt than we meant.

For once your penetration was at fault about Margaret. Her little worry had nothing to do with Jem: we have had a refusal here too, but of a very different person. Mr. Weekes, the curate, who began his relations to me with a rather exaggerated version of the civility due from a younger man to a considerably older one, has become more and more obsequious the last week or two, till at last it was positively oppressive. Margaret, regarding him as an inoffensive person to whom it would be a sin to refuse charity, continued to instruct him in cycling along with me. Last Thursday morning he came round when I happened to be well occupied with letters and Enticknap (I do remember that Friday is outward mail day, for the sake of keeping up with some old colleagues), and I said that if Mr. Weekes and Margaret would start on our usual run—the one approximately flat piece of the Thursborough road near us which you once complained of as our one dull walk—I would come after them presently and overtake or meet them. 'Huzur,' said Margaret (she will call me Huzur,

though I have explained to her that it is quite pointless), 'can't you really come with us?' But I really could not very well, and saw no need for it. In about half an hour I stepped out to fetch my hired machine from the portion of the stable which Margaret has converted into a cycle-house, when Margaret came riding in at the gate, faster than usual, and almost ran against me, with Mr. Weekes panting and wobbling after her. They dismounted and took their bicycles in (Mr. Weekes's lives here till he can find storage elsewhere—there is no place at all in his lodging in the village, and as his and mine were hired from the same shop in Thursborough at the same time it seemed the natural thing), and as I was moving in the same direction there came out in Margaret's most practical housekeeper's voice—the one she uses when something stupid aggravates her—'Do stop talking that nonsense, Mr. Weekes, and don't upset my machine.' Then a limp black figure, dusty as to the knees, came scrambling past me with a hasty salute most unlike Mr. Weekes's usual ceremony, and when he was well out of the gate Margaret emerged and half drew, half drove me into the study. 'What,' said I, 'you don't mean to tell me he has——?' She looked as if she did not quite know whether to laugh or to cry; you know I become imbecile when people cry; but happily the laugh turned the scale, and, after giving a little choke or two, she collapsed on a stool in a violent fit of laughter. 'Yes, indeed,' she said, when she could find words, 'and he's been proposing all the time.' Apparently Mr. Weekes accepted the chance as a providential omen, and as soon as they were fairly started he began to blurt out incoherent compliments, in which the virtues of Margaret, Much Buckland, and myself were hopelessly tangled, and then reeled off what he intended to be a proposal in due form, with a full exposition of the secular and spiritual advantages that would accrue to both parties, and to the people of the Bucklands, from Margaret becoming Mrs. Septimus Weekes. As he is barely capable of riding and talking at the same time, his discourse was adorned by narrowly averted collisions with the Squares' family coach, a farmer's cart, a donkey, a wheelbarrow, and Margaret herself. All these events gave Margaret plenty to do in looking out for herself and ejaculating imperative cautions, so she could only get out a few words of dissent. When he followed her into the stable he essayed to go down on one knee, but the space being limited, he only achieved stumbling over Margaret's machine and barking his shin against the mud-guard. Net

result—Mr. Weekes must find quarters for his bicycle somewhere else without loss of time. By good luck there was Jem's coming—now come, in fact—and I wrote a little note explaining to poor Septimus that Jem was very particular about having plenty of room. So there is another exit, and I have escaped, I trust, a solemn letter or a solemn interview or both. And Margaret, I think, now feels more intimate with her half-known parent from the Indies. She had been suspecting the catastrophe for some days, but looked, as I should have looked, for something much more formal and dignified. She is not exactly angry with the man, but vexed at his folly. Such persons do seem a blot on the reasonableness of things.

Now concerning the arrival of Jem and Mr. Shipley, which also has had unexpected elements. Arthur's movements are known to you, as he did his duty by calling on you before he came on here for the holidays, and you have verified for yourself his healthy state of indifference to the problems of the universe. I don't think he will turn out the sort of young man who considers that his own opinions must be of serious importance to God Almighty. Well, Jem telegraphed to us on Tuesday to expect him by the Thursborough road, and the three of us set off wheeling after lunch on the chance of a meeting. About four miles out we perceived, as the old-fashioned first chapter used to say, two riders approaching at a swift and steady pace from the cathedral town. Meanwhile, we had been discussing the unknown Mr. Shipley. My guess was a dry, precise little man. Margaret's was a tall, thin, anæmic man, with a stoop and blinking eyes. 'Oh! no,' said Arthur, 'that's not the sort. I know those awfully clever history chaps; we had one to give a lecture to the School Society this half. He was red and smooth and just like a Rugby football, and looked as if he couldn't stand up by himself. He talked of nothing but common fields and grass-farming and mangold-wurzels; that's what they make us learn for history now.' 'Look,' said Margaret, 'isn't that Jem?' 'Somebody with him, then,' said Arthur. A few minutes showed that it certainly was Jem, and with him a proper enough man of no remarkable dimensions any way in excess or defect, and of decidedly cheerful aspect, old enough to wear a full beard in defiance of the modern fashion of youth—that is, enormously old to Arthur's eyes, and in the novelist's 'prime of life' to mine. 'Let me introduce Mr. Shipley,' said Jem; 'we met at Oxbridge some time since,

and we have fallen in on the road.' Not a bit like any of our guesses. Things very seldom are, so far as I know, and people never. So we rode back to the Vicarage quite an imposing procession, and if Jem thought the pace funereal, he did not say so.

To the Vicarage, because Mr. Shipley did not know the way; and Mr. Follett, who was walking in the garden, had us all in to tea. We took the back way by reason of our machines, and thereby were surprised. For who should be sitting with Mrs. Follett but poor Weekes! She is a motherly comfortable person (all the more so to the world from having no children of her own), and he doubtless had come for consolation. Margaret made herself a rampart of Jem and me. Mrs. Follett asked if there was any more talk of war in London, but Jem, not having been in London for some days, disclaimed knowledge, and Mr. Shipley said there was nothing certain. 'Is it not shocking, Mrs. Follett,' said Mr. Weekes, 'that war should still be possible? My friend Dr. Woggles, of the Universal Arbitration League, writes to me in a truly painful state of anxiety.' 'I am not sure that the Vicar agrees with you,' said Mrs. Follett. 'But on all Christian principles——' he replied, and, catching sight of Margaret, gaped and came to a dead stop. 'But,' said Mr. Follett, who of course knew nothing of our late episode, 'a clerk in orders is hardly free to deny that Christian men may sometimes lawfully bear arms. Dr. Woggles is probably not bound by the Articles. And there are some other archaic writings which we are bound at least not to dismiss without consideration. Sir Richard, will you kindly take down that Vulgate which is just behind your head on the shelf? Thank you. And you, Miss Margaret, will you read this verse? You learnt Latin at your High School, doubtless with the true Italian vowels—one thing at least that girls are taught better than boys.' 'Please, Mr. Vicar, I don't know Latin,' said Margaret. 'Enough to read a text in the Vulgate,' said Mr. Follett, 'and our barbarous English Latin is not what the Vulgate deserves.' 'A good judgment,' said Mr. Shipley. 'It will save you talking,' I whispered to Margaret. So she took the book from the Vicar, and with a ring in her voice quite different from the housekeeper tone, and (it seemed to my ears, which have heard a good few tongues between Gibraltar and Bombay) a mighty pretty Italian accent, she read out:—

*'Accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum, potentissime. Specie tua et pulchritudine tua intende, prospere procede et regna,*

*propter veritatem et mansuetudinem et iustitiam : et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua.*

'I suppose,' said Mr. Shipley, 'those last words are wrongly translated, but in themselves I like them better than the "terrible things" of the English version.' 'That was why I chose the Latin,' said Mr. Follett. Mr. Weekes had vanished. 'Well,' said I, not having attended much to Western public affairs for some years, and having no clear or decided notions about the Cuban question, 'and who is your mighty man that is to gird himself with his sword upon his thigh?' 'The President of the United States,' said Mr. Follett. '*Et deducat ipsum mirabiliter dextera sua,*' added Mr. Shipley. 'He's all right,' said Jem.

So there you have incidentally the answer to your question about rumours of war. We are to dine at the Vicarage to-morrow. Merlin, who you remember came from Jem's old home, is quite spry at seeing him again. Arthur, who patronises us all except Jem in cycling, took out the family and Mr. Shipley for a ride to-day, and on the return was cautioning us about the incline down to the house, when the learned man, remarking that the slight breeze against us was an excellent substitute for the brake, put up his feet, and, drawing ahead of Arthur by the advantage of a man's weight over a boy's, sailed in neatly through the one open leaf of the gate with just enough way on to dismount easily. Whereupon Arthur has confided to Margaret and me that he considers Shipley an old brick, and doesn't believe he can be an historian at all.

I am asking Charles and Minnie to come here for the short Whitsuntide vacation. You have never told me your opinion about the binding of Tod's Rajasthan—and lots of other things. I must contrive to see you soon, though they have given me an infinite deal of nothing to do as chairman of the Parish Council, and Wessex farmers are less manageable than Rajput princes, and trains at Buckland Road station are few and evil. The only fast thing one sees there is the Midland express running through to the north, which is obviously not of much use to a man who wants to go to London. It is said that it once slipped a coach for a director, which made a nine days' wonder for all Buckland folk. Think of a time to suit you, and I will make it out somehow. No more at present from

Your loving Brother,  
RICHARD ETCHINGHAM.

### THE L. S. D. OF SPORTING RENTS.

THE author of a recent work on the laws for the protection of game points out that, though formerly denounced as relics of barbarism and a means of oppression by landlords, they have now become a valuable source of revenue to the country. So they have, in a sense, for the sum paid in licences to kill game amounted last year to 184,488*l.* But this, though a means of public revenue, is not a source of individual *wealth*, nor can the sum paid to the public Exchequer for State permission to kill game be compared with the vast rent-roll now poured into the pockets of private owners and occupiers of land for the practical exercise of the same rights. Part of this sum is contributed by sportsmen who are not owners of land; but a very large proportion is paid by land owners whose estates do not produce the kind of game—whether fur, fish, or feather—which they prefer to pursue.

The capital value of the sporting rents advertised by a single firm of land agents amounted last year to 8,750,000*l.*, reckoning the letting value at 4 per cent. The fund so expended elsewhere than in Scotland is now of such magnitude that it deserves consideration, if only from the economic side. The effect of this increment of rent, first felt in the Highlands, where poor landowners were raised from penury to comfort, and then from comfort to wealth, by the demand for grouse moors and deer forests, and the discovery that the former could be improved year by year and the latter 'manufactured,' has now extended to the remotest counties of England, where at all points within reasonable distance of London or the larger towns prices for shooting and fishing are ever on the rise, though the quality of the sport, owing to the indifference of many occupiers and their ignorance of the profits which a little care would ensure, tend to become yearly rather worse than better. It is with the rise in the value of English, rather than of Scotch, sporting rights, and the prices paid for shooting and fishing in the South, rather than that in the North, that this paper mainly deals; for the values of good English shooting and fishing often stand now at double and treble what they were even twenty years ago. But as Scotland has been



the forerunner in this matter, a glance at the present mine of wealth in Scotch shootings may give some clue to what is to come in the future to English landed estates of every degree of sporting capacity.

If anyone would measure the price which the modern Englishman is willing to pay to gratify his taste for sport, let him take the list of deer forests to let for any one season. The number of these 'forests'—in great part manufactured to meet the demand, and as much commercial undertakings as the stocking of a cattle ranche—is as striking as the prices obtained are astonishing. Good and bad, ancient 'forest' or modern deer ranche, they owe their value solely to their sporting rights, and their values are almost entirely an increment of the present reign. It is not, however, a net gain to the owner, because the sheep have been displaced. On the other hand, as sheep no longer pay as they used to, and many of the big sheep farmers were ruined, the net gain is much larger than would otherwise be the case.

As one ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory, and figures are not so misleading as some persons prefer to maintain, let us glance at the prices asked—and, we may add, obtained without difficulty—for Scotch shootings. Perhaps Inverness is the favourite, as it is the most beautiful, of the deer-producing counties. Here we shall be in touch with the best article and the highest prices. But the choice is not limited to one or two counties; for even of deer forests, the dearest and scarcest of the demesnes on which sporting rights are for hire, there are annually from seventy to a hundred in the market. The total aggregate rental asked for seventy such estates, on which red deer, ranging in numbers from six or seven to 150 stags and hinds, may be shot in a season, amounted last year to 109,000*l.* This total is made up of rentals varying from 4,000*l.* to 400*l.* But in the county of Inverness alone, the sporting rights of the first twenty estates on one of the large agents' lists amounted to just under 40,000*l.*, while that of the first ten reached 26,000*l.* Five hundred and thirty-nine grouse moors; four hundred and fifty-eight mixed shootings, with every kind of fowl, from grouse and pheasants to snipe, rock pigeons, and Solan geese; fifty-five winter shootings, yielding birds and beasts from snipe to red deer hinds; and two hundred and seventy private fisheries, advertised by the same firm in a single season, testify to the recognition

of this magnificent source of income to landed proprietors mainly north of the Tweed. If we set the total annual value of the above list at 250,000*l.*, deducting the rent of houses let with the sportings, we shall not be much above the mark; and adding to this another 100,000*l.* for deer forests, we shall get 350,000*l.* as the annual value of shootings let by a single firm of agents engaged in forwarding this pleasant and profitable business between landlord and sporting tenants across the border. In other words, as we have said above, this represents the interest at 4 per cent. of a capital value of 8,750,000*l.*, credited to the owners of these particular moors, woods, and runs, as the value of their sporting rights alone!

With this incomplete reference to the value of sporting rights in Scotland, we may proceed to the main object of this paper, which is to give some facts and forecasts as to the present and future values accruing to landlords from their sporting rights in England, and more especially in the southern, home, western, and eastern counties, which have been hit hardest by the decrease in the agricultural value of land.

Really first-class English pheasant shootings are more valuable than grouse moors, as the following instances show: 2,500 acres of good mixed shooting, with no house, a railway within two miles, and a thoroughly good record of game killed for four seasons, let for eleven months, excluding January, the last month of the shooting season, for 850 guineas! The landlord paid all wages and 'rearing expenses,' while the tenant paid for the beaters. 150*l.* would amply cover keepers' wages and hire of sitting hens for so small an area. So we may set the value of the sporting rights of this 2,500 acres at a clear 700*l.* per annum. It is doubtful if the *net* profit to the owner from agricultural rent for this property amounted to 2,000*l.* per annum. Hence his sporting rights represent more than one-third of his income from his land. The average bag of game was about 4,000 head. In Hampshire we find 50 guineas asked for the shooting of 800 acres for the month of September alone; and in Hertfordshire 1,500 acres of partridge shooting, for which 250*l.* is wanted for the season. The bag expected is 250 to 300 head of partridges, 200 hares, and 600 rabbits. This price is the highest we have seen demanded for so small a bag; but as the ground is within easy reach of town it was probably obtained. The rental gives 3*s.* 4*d.* per acre.

There can be no better instance of the increment from this

source to the occupiers of purely agricultural farms than the recent history of the rents for partridge shooting in North Norfolk. On many of the large estates of this district the sporting rights have always been reserved by the owners. But on a very large proportion the tenant farmers have the sporting rights in their own hands, and have so held them for the last fifteen years or more. The greater part of this land is famously well farmed, not the poor, sandy, heathy soil which one sees round Thetford, and what is called the 'breck' land of Norfolk, much of which is hardly fit for anything else but game farming and rabbit warrens; though there is some of this at Sandringham. It is light chalky soil, which drains itself; and though near to the sea, the crops never seem to suffer from the sea-fogs. This land is divided into very large fields, with small weak fences between them, and very little artificial cover, except the strips of wood and plantations for partridges to nest in. The big bare fields are all farmed 'high,' with crops set like patterns, and great flocks of sheep, and turnip fields to feed them. Nothing whatever is conceded to the needs of game. Not a thistle patch, or a rough uncleaned ditch, or a late crop of thin barley is to be seen to hold birds late or give them nesting-places early. The land is, in fact, farmed on thorough 'business' principles; all the rabbits are killed off and a large percentage of the hares, and yet the shooting rents are simply enormous, because this district is, for some cause not clearly understood, the *second best* natural partridge ground in England. The best is on the Norfolk 'breck' lands; but the country from Wolferton (the station for Sandringham) past Docking, Heacham, Stanhoe, Holkham, and on to Cromer, swarms with partridges; and as all of it has the same natural advantages, except that that which fringes the reclaimed marshes of the coast is perhaps the best, the demand for shootings there is keen. Now these stocks of partridges do not cost the tenant farmer one single penny, either to rear or to protect. The men on his farm give an eye to the nests, and fortunately shooting has so long been recognised as a valuable asset in that part of the country that no one ventures an inch across the border when shooting neighbouring land, and egg-stealing is reported and punished promptly, as it ought to be. There are no rabbits left, and the Ground Game Act enables the tenant to keep the stock of hares as low as he likes. Consequently, in letting this shooting, he lets only partridge shooting; and to maintain this, as

we have said, costs him nothing. Before seeing exactly what it brings him in now, we may go back fifteen years, when farming was at its worst, after a period of great prosperity. If he did not hold the right of sporting then, he probably received it *gratis*, or *plus* a big reduction of rent about that time. This was fair enough, for times were shocking, and the landlord was often only too glad to part with sporting rights in place of cash. Rents then went lower still, and on these big farms of from 500 to 1,200 acres the new tenants generally entered naturally into the sporting right. It was not, in fact, attempted to be withheld; times were still too bad. Neither did the tenants, though anxious to make all the money they could, set any high monetary value on this right. A very few years ago hardly one of these farmers let his shooting. They kept it to amuse themselves and their friends. Then one or two set the example of letting; and the prices made, followed by the steady increase in the demand for shooting, and the subsequent rise of its letting value per acre, have made this practice almost universal.

There is no doubt that the prices paid for this North Norfolk shooting are too high, even in the face of the demand for it. One farm of 1,000 acres, with no wood on it at all, purely partridge shooting, let for 110*l.* The farm itself is only rented at 540*l.* per annum, so for his sporting right the occupier netted a little over one-fifth of the rent he was paying. Three years ago he did not let it at all, and fifteen years ago he might perhaps have made 30*l.* or 40*l.* for his shooting, a rent which would have entitled the shooting tenant to keep up enough rabbits to do 10*l.* worth of damage at least. This 'unearned increment' represents to such a tenant a reduction on his rent of twenty per cent., a very welcome and real addition to the value of landed property. For there is little doubt that when the present leases are rearranged, this increment will be taken into consideration as a landlord's asset. Quite recently on land in Norfolk rented by the agricultural tenants at 6*s.* per acre, the sporting rights were at once sublet at 2*s.* per acre.

Generally speaking, it is cheaper to rent English shooting from the landlord than from the tenant. The former does not drive such a hard bargain. On the other hand, in this case the area is often much larger than that which can be hired from tenants, and it commonly happens that a large house has to be taken as well.

It is the common experience of land agents that the shooting lets the house. Consequently it is usually reserved for the owner in making leases with tenant farmers.

The valuation of sporting rights in this case is somewhat difficult, because the rent of the house has to be deducted from that of manor and shooting. Often, however, there is an offer to let them separately. Whether these high rents for mere partridge shooting will be maintained is doubtful. The logical course would be for them to continue rising, as the rents of grouse moors have gone on rising. Grouse moors now fetch on the average 1*l.* per brace of grouse killed in *good* seasons. On the small 1,000-acre shooting above mentioned 300 brace of partridges were killed in one season—at a cost in rent of 110*l.* This is something over 7*s.* per brace, which is unsatisfactory enough when one remembers that last season partridges only averaged 2*s.* per brace to sell through the season. But the bag is a large one, much larger for the area than on most grouse moors. It would be an exceptionally good Scotch moor that would yield anything approaching an average of 300 brace to each 1,000 acres. So comparing these bags, and taking the rise in value from shooting as the standard, there would seem to be room for a rise in the rents of partridge manors in England.

It may be objected that as the partridge is to the English fields what the grouse is to the moors of Scotland, the mainstay of highly rented natural sport, the pheasant being an artificial product in both countries, the partridge ought to be capable of making as rapid increase as the grouse have under care and preservation, if English sporting rights are to maintain their rise in value. It is not contended here either that the partridge will increase as grouse have, or that the prices of partridge shooting will reach the fancy price of grouse shooting, though it is *not impossible that they will approximate*, possibly by a lowering of the value of grouse moors, while that of partridge manors rises. But the partridge on land now neglected will increase enormously. The writer has known 400 birds killed on 600 acres, where previous to ordinary care being taken not 100 were shot in the season.

If the shooting rights of ordinary English land are a potential silver mine with an increasing yield, a decent trout stream or salmon river is a very Pactolus; it simply flows with gold! The quantity of such fishing, especially of good trout fishing,

within reach of London is so limited, and the demand by wealthy fishermen so great, that no limit to the prices asked is yet in sight. 300*l.* was asked this season for 1½ mile on a trout stream in Kent, near to London. I believe there are reaches of the Test and Itchen which let for five shillings a fathom, and that before long a mile of Hampshire trout-stream, without an acre of land except the right to fish from the banks, will be a fair younger son's provision. The price of the short length of the Itchen opposite the Hospital of St. Cross is always quoted as an index to the market value of Hampshire fishing. Even small and distant streams in the South fetch fancy rents. Thus for a fishing on the river Lambourne, above Newbury, yielding 175 trout in sixteen days' fishing—which, it must be admitted, is very pretty sport—eighty guineas are asked for from May 15 to the end of August. This, though only trout fishing, is reasonable enough, compared with the prices asked for by no means first-rate salmon streams. For *nine hundred yards* of the Tweed 80*l.* is required; for two and a half miles on the same river, 300*l.* On the Eden, for nine or ten casts, with a prospect of thirty fish if the water is in good order, 90*l.*, or (say) 3*l.* per fish!

The carefully worded advertisements of fishings to let suggest that, however shy the trout, there is no fear of scaring the angler. The following strikes us among others taken at random:—Wales—on the banks of the Usk. A small house with two sitting rooms and five bedrooms, also servants' room, and a cottage adjacent to the river. The fishing to let consists of about one mile on both banks of the Usk, with salmon and trout. The tenancy would be from the 15th of February to the 2nd of November. The maximum recent bag of salmon is stated to be 138, and the lowest 28—trout numerous. For this the rent asked is 490*l.*! The landlord employs a man and his wife, and pays their wages; the man to act as river watcher. But the advertiser warns the lessee that the man must not be expected to work in the day if he is to watch at night. Considerate man! One would have thought that the 490*l.* would almost have covered the expense of a regular watcher.

Returning from Wales to Hampshire, the following gives some idea of what is the present value of a really first-rate bit of water on a Hampshire stream. The property advertised was on the Test, with one mile of first-class trout fishing and some side streams. With this fishing—by a curious inversion of the usual order of thought—'goes' a good ordinary gentleman's house,



with four sitting-rooms, a dozen bed-rooms, and pretty old gardens, also a fair partridge manor with a few pheasants and hares; estimated total bag, about 400 partridges and 250 pheasants, hares, and rabbits. By the lease the tenant is to pay for this 400*l.* a year, with a premium of 1,800*l.*, or another 300*l.* per annum *plus* interest on 1,800*l.* for six years, say 44*l.* As such a house could be rented at 150*l.* in a very good neighbourhood, the annual price of this bit of fishing and shooting may be set at 594*l.* per annum.

It is difficult to hire sporting rights in England, when the estate is of large dimensions, without the mansion which naturally goes with the land. Consequently the rent of the house has in most cases to be deducted from the rent of the shooting. The 'capital residence' or 'fine old Elizabethan mansion' is a dead weight to the shooting tenant; at the same time the tenant of one of these houses must have some shooting to amuse himself with. Sometimes the shooting and fishing is rather cheap as an annexe to the house. More often the house is a burden which makes the sport abominably dear. The writer knows of a Scotch castle, let with 20,000 acres of mixed shooting and fishing, which, in addition to the rent, cost on a very modest scale 3,000*l.* a year to be decently comfortable in, while on the whole of this big area of shooting and fishing not one good day's sport was obtained. Sometimes really first-class sporting ground has suffered from *too little shooting*. On one very good estate in Yorkshire a friend of the writer's took the shooting. It was about 3,000 acres, 250 of which was cover; and, as things go, it was not dear. But the first year there were very few birds on it, and those mainly old ones. The head keeper explained matters thus: 'Well, you see, sir, this estate has never been properly shot. There was Sir William; he was too old, and he didn't shoot. Then there was his sister, Miss Jane; she come into the property, and *she* didn't shoot. And now there's Lady B.; she don't shoot either—and that's how it comes we've so few birds.'

As a rule the very best shootings do not come into the market at all. People who know their value are always ready to take them when the tenant dies. Consequently the values of sporting rights given above are certainly twenty-five per cent. below those of the very choicest shootings. Many of these, belonging to the great owners, are *never* let, and probably never will be. The same holds good of salmon rivers.



Really first-class waters are so well known that it is a privilege to be allowed to pay any price the owner may want when the last tenant dies or retires. If the shooting of some first-class English property comes into the market, the lessor is generally a lady who has succeeded or is manager during a minority. These opportunities are worth taking, for the traditions on these properties are all in favour of game preserving, and the lessee meets no opposition; but, on the contrary, if he is fairly agreeable and considerate, will probably win golden opinions.

The instances given above are evidence both of the actual and possible money value accruing from the letting of sporting rights in England. But apart from any fancy rise in these values from the increase of demand and the limited supply, a very large increment could be obtained by the exercise of a little good sense and intelligence on the part of occupiers and owners in districts where, as the phrase goes, there is 'no preserving.' This phrase has not the negative significance which its form indicates. 'No preserving' means, in nine cases out of ten, entire neglect of any precautions whatever to maintain a stock of game—not of artificially reared pheasants, but the game native and natural to the soil—the partridge, the hare, and the rabbit, especially the partridge. It is a form of that laziness and narrowness which has made the ordinary English agricultural tenant the most helpless, unprogressive, 'stick-in-the-mud' class engaged in any commercial industry in this country. They are now well awake to the fact that they can get good money for their shooting. But while always ready to raise the rent on their shooting tenants, they rarely, very rarely, take any trouble to raise the head of game by according the ordinary means of protection so easily given by the occupiers. If they would only give directions to their farm hands to take care of the nests, and pay a small reward for those that hatch off, discourage dogs running loose on their land in the nesting and hatching time, and make their labourers report any cases of netting or wiring hares, they would raise the stock to double or treble its present number. In many parishes farm adjoins farm for miles, on which the occupiers do not expend as many shillings in protecting the valuable asset of game as they do in growing a crop of geraniums and pansies for their flower beds. Over these large areas the shooting is almost worthless. Shooting tenants now require to see the previous year's results; and no sensible man would even rent it, for if he

came down after the first week in the season he would scarcely get a shot. . . A little combination, a little less of the lazy belief that game 'comes of itself,' and this kind of ground would be worth 2s. per acre, instead of at the outside sixpence or sevenpence. We knew an instance in which one of these neglected areas was gradually secured by one enterprising sportsman, who by taking the shooting of different farms, and adding to his area from year to year, secured, mostly by lease, sixteen hundred acres, for which he paid an average of sixpence per acre. It was very fair partridge ground; but when he secured it there was scarcely a bird or a hare to be seen after the first few days' shooting. None of the occupiers gave a thought to the game, and preferred sixpence per acre with no trouble to 2s. per acre at the cost of a little vigilance. So they let their labourers take what eggs there were, to sell or make puddings of; and any villager who took the trouble could wire the hares, and often sold them back to the owners. Oddly enough, this was near London. The new shooting tenant, with the services of one elderly keeper, has made a good partridge manor of this ground. It has swarmed with birds for the last three seasons, has been regularly shot by four guns, and could be let to-morrow for 140*l.*; and all the men's wages amount to 40*l.* But this leaves a difference of 60*l.* between the present value and that which it formerly fetched. Where numbers of small holdings adjoin, the value of the sporting right usually lapses entirely. The occupiers are always pottering about their fields, they all keep dogs, and few partridges ever bring off a brood. This is ridiculous and wasteful. The birds sit so close that unless the eggs are actually taken they seldom desert, and the small tenant, being constantly present on his land, could easily see that the nests are not disturbed. His small patchy crops are capital cover, and if he can get 3*l.* for his sixty acres of shooting it means a good deal to him. But as it is, he prefers the company of his terrier, even to his possible 3*l.* or 4*l.*, and the dog disturbs in its daily visits every partridge's nest on the holding. All the adjacent holdings are 'messed about' in the same way, and the sporting value is nothing. They manage these things better in Germany. In Mecklenburg-Schwerin there are numbers of parishes in which the whole area is broken up into small holdings. The owners combine to protect the partridges and hares, shut up their dogs in the nesting time, and the official who corresponds to our Chairman of the Parish Council lets

the whole to the highest bidder, and *uses the money to pay the rates!*

It is well known that in Scotland there was a very large proportionate increase in the return of game killed when preserving grouse became universal. Whole ranges of moorland formerly neglected were protected, the grouse being looked after in the nesting season and arrangements made to prevent wasteful heather burning, which injured the stock of grouse. When there were *no* neglected areas, all the adjacent ground became better stocked, and gave far less trouble. As English agricultural holdings are very small in comparison with Scotch moors, this extension of preserving is difficult to maintain. But if small occupiers will combine they will find the same good results accruing, and higher rents paid in proportion to the rise in quality of the sporting. Passing from small holdings and their depreciated sporting value, to large ones, where intelligence and industry supplant indolence and stupidity, the following case may be of interest: Some years ago a private company was formed to take advantage of the very low rents of agricultural land on the western line in Wiltshire, Salisbury Plain, and adjacent counties. This company is now almost the largest farming concern in England. It secured great tracts of land, sometimes as low as 2*s.* 6*d.* per acre. Much was held on long leases at 4*s.* and 3*s.* 6*d.* per acre. For the company the good farmhouses attached to the dozens of farms held by them were no use. All they needed were the bailiffs' and labourers' cottages. Being ahead of the times in more ways than one, they insisted that their managers should make it part of the labourers' duty to give an eye to the game, especially the partridges, and look upon this as one of the regular assets of the farm, just as much as the poultry. There was soon a good head of game, and, as much of the land was contiguous, the company's game preserves helped each other, according to the obvious and (in Scotland) well-recognised rule, that the more general and widespread the care of game the more satisfactory the results over that area. The company then let all their shooting at high prices, and let all the old farmhouses for shooting-boxes. These houses were included in their leases of the farms, and as the 'company' could not live in twenty houses the profit made on them was wholly to the good. The result was that the rent of thousands of acres, held on long leases, of this very low-rented land was paid for by the shooting rents and the rent of the farmhouses as shooting-boxes.

The latter depends on the existence of the former, for no one would take these houses, often far from a station and in out-of-the-way places, unless they were headquarters for sport. Here, then, is a very striking instance of the economic part played by 'sporting rights' properly used.

So far we have mainly indicated the profits accruing to owners and occupiers from the new value commanded by the letting of the enjoyment of the sporting right. We must, however, spare a word to the tenant, who has the privilege of paying on the scale we have indicated. If he is to exercise his expensive amusement undisturbed, he will do well to treat the whole thing as a business matter in the drawing-up of leases and agreements. The law is all on the side, not of the owner, but of the occupier of the soil, the farming tenant. We do not refer here to ground game, but to the exercise of all sporting rights whatever. The law assumes these to belong, not to the *owner*, but to the occupier. Unless the latter gives them up in his lease, he has them as well as his farm. The owner has parted with them, and cannot let them. They belong to the tenant. Even if the latter has agreed to give up the sporting right to his landlord, he cannot divest himself of the right of killing ground game.

Further, any agreement made between the shooting tenant and the landlord must be by document under seal. If it is not, the farming tenant can refuse the sporting tenant permission to enter. Where possible, in all English shootings it is far preferable, after the first year, to obtain a lease for a term of years following. The times make it likely that the price of shootings will rise, so there is little chance of a loss; while the tenant has some chance of recouping himself for 'unexhausted improvements.'

C. J. CORNISH.

## HEPZIBAH AND SENNACHERIB.

'SENNACHERIB says Hepsy hedn't ought to done it 'thout takin' his advice.'

As Mrs. Burrill thus spoke she sighed, and let herself down into her rocking-chair by degrees, as if she had been a badly jointed doll. She groaned when fairly seated, and after turning and chewing the bit of Turkey rhubarb in her mouth, as if the act of rumination cleared her thoughts, she resumed her discourse.

'Sennacherib says he's the only man in the hull family, an' that's the truth. You've be'n a widder nigh on to sixteen years, Jane, an' your boys aint quite seventeen yit, an' twins at that. Sennacherib says twins aint never good fur ez much as ef they wa'n't twins.'

Jane laughed. 'I guess my boys is equal to any, an' I guess folks know it,' she said comfortably. She was a stout, rosy woman, the very opposite of her sister Burrill, who was sallow and bony, as well as melancholy.

'You always take things so easy, Jane! Thet's jest whar it is. Sennacherib says there don't nobody think of nothin', nor worry about nothin', only him and me.'

'Well, Elmiry, you an' Sennacherib kin worry ef you want to. I don't know about *him*, but you'll be down with one of your sick headaches, as sure's you live, ef you go on this way. Hepsy kin take the new minister to board for all me. I've got my own work to tend to, an' I calculate to tend right up to it. Moreover, I expect Hepsy'll tend to her'n. Ef she don't, taint my fault, an' I aint goin' to worry none. You goin' to the prayer meetin' this evenin'?'

'Maybe; I don't know yit. Hepsy's awful sot on havin' her own way, don't you think so, Jane?'

'I don't know.'

'I guess I know, then. I guess Sennacherib an' me took trouble enough with her long after Mehitable died. We calculated she'd ought to rented her house this winter, an' come an' stop 'long of us. Sennacherib's troubled with dyspepsy, an' Hepsy's real handy 'bout cookin'. I aint able to git round as I used. . . . Ef

she'd done the way we wanted, we could hev boarded the minister ez well ez not.'

Mrs. Wing glanced at her sister, and repressed a smile. Mrs. Burrill had twice tried to keep boarders, but had failed, and the disappointment had worn upon her.

'Sennacherib says seems ez ef she took the minister to board out of spite,' she continued. 'It's wonderful how spiteful folks is, when you come to look into things.'

'I don't see why Sennacherib thinks she done it out of spite.'

'Don't see why she done it out of spite? Aint she my own sister's child, I'd like to know? An' aint she all the niece we've got—you an' me? You aint but ten years older'n she is. You aint never had no care of her, Jane Wing.'

'She was twenty-five year old, if she was a day, when Mehitable died.'

'She hed the typhoid dysentery to our house, I guess, ef she *wa'nt* a baby,' answered Mrs. Burrill, with asperity. 'An' ef she'd gone up to cousin Eliza Lawson's right off, after Mehitable was buried, she'd hed the typhoid dysentery thar, stid of to our house.'

'I don't suppose she had the dysentery o' purpose.'

'Wal, I don't know's she did, an' I don't know *as* she did. Seems ez ef everythin' come on Sennacherib an' me. You seen Hepsy lately, Jane?'

'I see her now, comin' up through the ten-acre lot.'

'I want to know!' exclaimed Mrs. Burrill. 'She's comin' along real fast,' she continued, looking out of the window with interest. 'She's comin' to borry somethin', Jane, sure's you live!'

'You there, Aunt Jane?' called a sharp voice outside, and a tall gaunt woman of forty came in hurriedly. Her sallow, wedge-shaped face became suffused with a deep crimson when she saw Mrs. Burrill.

'I come over to see ef you hed any white Indian meal, Aunt Jane. I haven't time to go to the store.'

'I guess I have, a little—about a cupful.'

'That'll do. I'll bring it back to-morrow.'

Hepsy followed Mrs. Wing into the inner kitchen, as if she dreaded to be alone with her Aunt Elmira. But that lady lifted up her voice, and spoke.

'Wal, Hepsy Choate, you've got holt of the new minister I

hear; but I guess you aint goin' to find it none too easy to keep him. They say he's awful partickler about his victuals. I heerd so when I was to Nantick last week.'

Hepsey flushed. 'I guess I know how to cook's well's some, Aunt Elmiry,' she rejoined.

'Wal, mebbe you kin. Mebbe you kin take keer of folks ez aint noways related to you; but your Uncle Sennacherib says you aint ben none too thoughtful of them's looked after you. He says 'twas real mean of you not to come an' ask his advice fore you rented rooms to the minister.'

Hepzibah took hold of the handle of the door. 'I guess I aint got time to stand here talkin', Aunt Elmiry.'

Mrs. Burrill lifted her forefinger. 'I'm goin' to give you a piece of my mind, Hepsey Choate, whether you want it or not. You're jest ez tickled cause you got Mr. Mason to board with you, an' you *would* take him, 'thout askin' advice. Ye'll sup sorer yit, now I tell ye, if ye don't look out. He's awful peaked an' pinin', Mr. Mason is, an' he'll eat you out of house an' home. Them pinin', ailin' folks allers do. *How much is he goin' to pay?* Your Uncle Sennacherib says you won't be able to lay by nothin', so now you know. He's allers right, Sennacherib is.'

Mrs. Burrill always quoted her husband. To do him justice, he had some of the qualities of command which must have belonged to the great Assyrian captain whose name he bore; but he had no scope for the development of these qualities, and had become irritable and fault-finding in consequence. He was a dry, spare, hard, little man, who farmed his own land successfully, ruled despotically over his wife (they had never had any children), and would fain have extended his rule to her relatives. But here he met with stubborn opposition. Hepzibah's grim, sour face grew bitter when his name was mentioned, and without vouchsafing a reply to her aunt, she opened the door and ran home. 'Home' was a tiny house, situated in a small but flourishing and well-kept garden. Hepzibah had inherited a small, empty, unfinished, unfurnished, and heavily mortgaged house from her father. It stood in a barren, desolate piece of ground. Now the ground was carefully cultivated, and rich in vegetables, fruit, and flowers; the mortgage was paid off; the house neatly finished and painted, and within it was decently furnished. To furnish the upper rooms and take one or two boarders had long been Hepzibah's desire. Now she had accomplished it. The sour hard look left her face for a



moment as she stood on the threshold of the upstairs rooms, and passed in review the preparations she had made for the minister's comfort. 'It doos look pretty neat!' she murmured to herself. Everything glittered with cleanliness and much rubbing. The furniture was very plain, but the big 'rocker' with its patchwork cushions, the dimity curtains, the rag carpets, and flag-bottomed chairs, represented so many precipices of desire triumphantly scaled by toil and economy. That the 'boarder' she had often wished for should be the 'minister,' was an event in her life—the realisation of an ambition. Mr. Mason esteemed himself fortunate in his boarding-place, and was so, for besides being an exquisitely clean and neat housekeeper, Hepzibah was an excellent cook, from the village point of view, and possessed a treasure of devotedness in her nature—a treasure quite unsuspected, because no one had ever cared to look for it.

The two years which followed Mr. Mason's arrival were the happiest of her life. He was very delicate, and failed gradually, and grew to depend more and more upon his landlady, and she cared for him as if she had been mother, sister, wife, all in one.

The third year began badly. Mr. Mason was perceptibly feebler, and in December had an attack of inflammation of the lungs which lasted long, and, in spite of the most careful nursing, left him frail and shadowy. The day the doctor pronounced him out of danger he also ordered him to go to a warmer climate.

'Is—— is—— Am I to understand that it is indispensable?' faltered the poor young man.

'Quite so,' said the doctor. 'And the sooner you go the better,' he added gruffly, for he was a kindhearted man, and still so young as not to be able to give a death warrant with indifference.

As he went downstairs Hepzibah waylaid him. Her face was white and pinched.

'Mr. Mason's real well now, ain't he?' she said sharply.

'He's better than he was,' answered the doctor, glancing instinctively at the door which led to the staircase.

Hepzibah closed it firmly and repeated, 'Mr. Mason's real well now, ain't he? Ef he goes on gittin' better he don't need to go down South, does he?'

'Yes, he does, it's the only chance he's got, not to be well—he'll never be that—but to live a few months longer.' And the doctor nodded hastily, jumped into his sleigh, and drove off.

Left to herself, Hepzibah's first care was to see that the stair door was still shut. Then she washed her face, smoothed her hair, and prepared the sick man's dinner, on a little tray, which she carried upstairs with a smiling countenance.

'Oh, dear! Miss Choate, I must go down South; did you know it?'

'It'll do you a heap of good,' answered Hepzibah cheerfully. 'Now you just eat your dinner, Mr. Mason, an' I'll look out your things. It's real pretty down South, I've heerd tell.'

'Perhaps it is,' answered the sick man, 'but I wish I didn't have to go. There's a little sum laid by that my mother left me. It will come in very well now. Poor mother always wanted to go South. Maybe she would have been alive now if she had. Yes, I suppose I must go, but it will be very lonely. I've got nobody in the world belonging to me. I wish *you* could go with me, Miss Choate.'

Hepzibah wished it also, but in vain. She spent a fortnight in feverish preparation, saw Mr. Mason off with a grim countenance and a quaking heart, came back alone to her desolate home, threw open the upper windows, took down curtains and roller blinds, and began a thorough cleaning of the empty rooms. The village women often said of her that she 'was a real steam engine to work,' and it is certain that she had never before toiled as on that cold winter's day. By nine o'clock at night the minister's rooms were again in perfect order and glittering with cleanliness, as if ready for the return which he flattered himself he would make in May. The wind blew icy cold outside, and heaped the fast falling snow into deep drifts. Hepzibah had locked up the house at sundown, and when, having finished her work, she came into the kitchen shortly after nine o'clock, she noticed that the panes in the double windows were frosted thick, but still she let down the green roller blinds, and fastened them tight. Then 'the agony that could neither be put off, nor avoided, came upon her.' She shut the door carefully, and sat down stiffly, on a chair placed against the wall next the stove; but she could not keep quiet. She began to move about from one part of the room to another, like a dumb creature stung by a pitiless lash. At last she spoke. 'O Lord! O Lord! He's gone! The minister's gone! He won't never come back! I try to think he will, but he won't; he won't! Oh dear! dear! *dear!* He's all I've got in the world. He *is*. I don't care! I will say it. I aint got

nobody, and he aint got nobody. If I could jest take care of him; keep on takin' care of him! There won't nobody do that where he's goin'. They don't care nothin' about him. They don't! He's all I've got! Oh, oh, *oh*! O Lord! have some mercy!

The winter night wore itself away while she wailed and wept, and the first grey February dawn surprised her still pacing the room and crying. But with the dawn, her New England sense of dignity and reserve came to her aid. The night of pain and tears seemed a disgraceful orgie, as to which she had no feeling but shame, now that it was day.

Still, when her Uncle Sennacherib came over in the morning to say 'I told ye so,' and 'Ye see it's all turned out jest 's I said it would,' and 'Guess you aint laid up nothin', eh, Hepsy? How you goin' to git along now, hey?' she bore an undaunted front, and only in pallor did her wedge-shaped face differ from its usual aspect. She answered, too, with all her habitual asperity, and her Uncle Sennacherib failed to draw a tear, and went away discomfited. It was one of the good man's characteristics, or rather habits, thus to pour forth home truths and gloomy prophecies, until his audience (generally a feminine one) gave way to tears. On such occasions he would push his hat back (he always wore it, even in the house) and survey his hearers from the vantage ground of the chair in which he sat, tilted back against the wall. Then, in a high nasal drawl, he would say:

'Wal, of all the weak, whinin' creeturs! What you all cryin' about, hey? I aint said nothin'.'

Hepzibah, however, generally refused him this satisfaction. But Uncle Sennacherib had his revenge three weeks later, when she suddenly burst in upon him and her aunt as they sat at supper. She was deadly pale, and she panted heavily.

'Laud sakes! Child! What's the matter?' exclaimed her aunt in real alarm, as she rose from the table. 'Be you took with spasms in the stummick, Hepsy? I'll make you some peppermint tea in a minnit.'

Hepsy shook her head, and gasped for breath. Sennacherib looked on calmly over his saucer of hot tea.

'What's to do, Hepsy?' he said incisively.

'I'm goin' away—right now,' gasped Hepzibah. 'I'm goin' away in the ten o'clock train. I came to ask if I might leave my cat here, Aunt Elmiry? I'm goin'—'

She stopped, trembling.

'Goin' over to Nantick, I s'pose? Got a job of tailorin'?' said Sennacherib, with a show of amiability.

'No, I aint goin' to Nantick.'

'Where *be* you goin'? To Ware?'

'No, I'm goin' down South. He's telegraphed fur me.'

'*Who's* telegraphed fur ye? Fur the Lord's sake sit still, can't ye?'

'*He* has! Our minister, Mr. Mason! He's took sick, an' he wants me, an' I'm goin'!' Hepzibah looked as if she would have rushed upon serried lances.

'Be you goin' off there down South *alone*? ' gasped Mrs. Burrill, astonished.

Sennacherib drank his tea slowly. Then he spoke.

'Wal, Hepsy Choate, I told ye ye'd sup sorer, an' ye hev, an' yit ye aint hed enough. Fur the Lord's sake! Goin' off thar down South, whar none of your folks hez ever bin, an' whar you aint got no call to go, fur the minister aint nothin' to you, nor never will be. He's mighty high an' mighty, seems to me, telegraphin' you to come to him. I'm all the uncle you've got, an' I say you hedn't ought to go. I know 's well 's I want to, you aint got none too much money laid by, for all you look so toppin'. Hez Mr. Mason sent money to pay your travellin' expenses?' he concluded, fixing Hepzibah with an eye like a gimlet.

She did not answer him, but extended her hand to her aunt for the limp hand shake which was all that ever passed between them, nodded to her uncle with neither more nor less than her usual grim stiffness, and hurried away, without asking for the loan which he had prepared himself to refuse. She left the key of her house with her aunt Jane Wing, and at ten o'clock took the train for the South. Her aunts and Sennacherib discussed her impetuous conduct in various notes of disapprobation, but they did not feel the least anxiety as to how she fared on her long journey, nor did she write to them. It was fully six weeks before Mrs. Burrill received a telegram, which startled her not a little. It was from a place in the South of Georgia, and ran thus:

'My husband died last night.

HEPZIBAH MASON.'

'Hepsy sent that to you, eh?' said Sennacherib, when he returned an hour later, and sat tilted against the wall, as usual.

'Wal, Hepzibah Choate never did do the right thing, accordin' to my way of thinkin'. She'd ought to sent that telegraph to me. The woman aint the head of the man, I guess. But the man's the head of the woman. Thet's Scriptur, if it aint Hepsy's view. I'm your head, I guess, Mis' Burrill, an' I'm goin' to be. Thar aint no letters goin' to be writ to Hepsy Choate, not ef I know it. She's a durn fool, ef thar ever was one. Wal, she's got a husband at last, ef he did die right off!' And he smiled sardonically.

But two days later a telegram came to Sennacherib himself.

'Returning with remains. Please meet on Monday.

HEPZIBAH MASON.'

Sennacherib imparted this to his wife with his own comments, and then stepped over to Mrs. Wing's with the tidings, which he announced thus:

'Seems Hepsy aint spent money enough yit. She's bringin' his body home now. He didn't have nothin' to leave, I guess. She'll hev to mortgage that house of hern now, sure. Might jest ez well hev buried her husband down thar whar he died. Wal, she wanted to kinder show off, I guess, now she's a widder. She aint be'n married jest but a minnit.'

When poor Hepzibah arrived in widow's weeds, and with her sad burden, her relatives did not conceal their opinion that she had done a foolish thing. She had come back poorer than she went, having spent her little all in the journey. The 'minister,' as she still called him, even in her thoughts, had interpreted her wistful looks at him, and had given her all he had to give, his name, and the small sum of money which had sufficed to carry his dead body back to the village, but not to bury it. When she stepped out of the cars, she had just fifty cents in her pocket. Still, she did not hesitate to select one of the handsomest and most expensive 'lots' in the cemetery, high up on a hill, where one or two weeping willows had been planted. She thought it a beautiful place. Standing by the open grave, in her widow's gown and veil, and receiving the respect accorded to a minister's widow, she felt herself set apart by a great sorrow, and a great honour, as well.

The next day Sennacherib came to tell her that the 'lot' must be paid for 'right off.' He was one of the trustees of the cemetery. He looked hard at her while he spoke, but she did not flinch, as she promised to have the money ready the next day. And she paid

it punctually. It had not been hard to raise, but the manner of raising it cost her great anxiety. Still, it was done. Then the old life began again. She had little difficulty in letting her rooms, but she took no more boarders. She worked hard at plain sewing and tailoring, and sold the produce of her garden to any one who was willing to buy it. No one was sorry for her, or condoled with her. Her own relatives thought her foolish and imprudent, and to most of the village people she appeared a ridiculous old maid, who had wanted to rush into matrimony at any cost. Her Uncle Sennacherib said biting things on the subject at the country store, and amused all the loungers who frequented it, thus giving a cue to the tone to be taken in regard to her. But it is doubtful if the village people would, in any case, have acted otherwise than as they did. The facts were laughable, and it is not very often that the general public looks beyond bare facts. When Sennacherib said, 'Wal, Hepsy wanted to have the hull thing complete. She wanted to show off kinder, that she was a wife an' a widder, an' so she brought the body along to do things up fair and square,' people laughed, and did not think of her possible suffering. She did suffer a good deal; her heart was full of pain, and her hands emptied of their service of love, though, fortunately for her, she had still to toil for her daily bread. It was a bitter disappointment to her, too, not to be condoled with. 'I guess I feel about 's bad as anybody could feel, ef I aint be'n married but an hour!' she sobbed sometimes, when she was alone. On Sundays she invariably went to the cemetery with a wreath for the grave.

Her garden was unusually flourishing that year, and she sold, not only vegetables and fruit, but flowers and plants. She added to her work also. Formerly she had worked only at tailoring and plain sewing; now she took quilts to piece and made rag carpets. 'She'll be goin' out cleanin' next,' Mrs. Burrill said mournfully. But, with all her toil, Hepzibah could save very little, and her heart sank when she counted her little hoard and saw how slowly it increased.

One June morning, when she had been two years a widow, she went into her garden at three o'clock, and began to dig up plants with feverish energy. Although she was a very quick worker, the sun had risen before she had finished the task she had assigned to herself, had put away her gardening implements, and had placed her baskets outside of the gate. As she stood waiting, a

wagon came in sight. A man in his shirt sleeves was driving it. He was a farmer, who lived on the outskirts of the village.

'No hurry, no hurry, Mis' Mason,' he said affably, as he stopped his wagon, and Hepzibah began to put in her baskets with nervous haste.

'You're awful fore handed,' he continued. 'But it's jest ez well, I guess. When we git to the cemetery, I'll help you with them plants. It'll be a tug, gittin' on 'em up the hill.'

'I'll be real obliged,' said Hepzibah, as she took her seat beside him. 'You're sure you'll be back from Ware by eight o'clock, Mr. Wiggin?'

'Course I'm sure. Ef you leave them baskits behind the fence thar, I'll stop an' git 'em, an' leave 'em to our house 'fore I come for you. Mother, she's cleared out the room, and cleaned it nice, and I guess your things will fit in real well. Here we be; I'll come fur you by eight o'clock, sure.'

When Mr. Wiggin left her, Hepzibah went to work energetically in her lot. By half-past seven she had finished planting, had piled the empty baskets behind the fence, and was walking rapidly home.

Mrs. Bates, the woman who rented the upstairs rooms, was looking out for her, and came down immediately to help, but there was nothing to be done.

'Why! you must have worked all night!' she exclaimed, looking round the room.

'Yes, I did. It's real good of you, Mis' Bates, but there aint nothin' to be done. I've spoke to Mr. Lawson, an' he says you can stay on till Thursday, when your half-year's up. I'll bid you good-bye now; I guess I hear the wagon a-comin'.'

Mrs. Bates hesitated, but Hepzibah held the door so resolutely, that she was conquered, and went upstairs without telling her, as she had intended, how sorry she was for her trouble.

At eight o'clock Mr. Wiggin came, and, with his help, Hepzibah's household goods were packed into the wagon. Her face was so sharp, and hard and white, and she worked in such stony silence, that the kindly man did not venture to speak to her. As she turned the key in the door, he stepped aside for a moment.

'My Land!' he exclaimed, as they drove off. 'You've took the hull lot of your plants up to the cemetery!'

'If I did, I had a right to, I guess,' answered Hepzibah.



'Thar wa'n't no mortgage on them flowers.'

The mortgage was to be foreclosed on Tuesday: this was Monday. Hepzibah worked hard all day putting her room in order. Every now and then she started and looked round nervously. At five o'clock her Aunt Elmira and her Uncle Sennacherib stepped in, and sat down without waiting to be asked.

'Ah! dear, dear me! dear, *dear* me!' began Mrs. Burrill mournfully.

'You jest shet up, an' let me talk, Mis' Burrill,' interrupted her spouse. 'Wal, Hepsy Choate, or Hepsy Mason, it don't make much odds which 'tis now, I guess; you've supped sorer, jest's I told ye. Ef you'd mortgaged that ere house of yourn to me, mebbe I shouldn't ha' foreclosed so soon. Mebbe I shouldn't, I dunno. But you won't never hear to no one.'

Hepzibah stood up rigid and stiff. 'I guess you'd ha' foreclosed sooner, Uncle Sennacherib. Thar aint no use in talkin' about it now.'

'Aint no use. Wal, I guess your Aunt Elmiry an' me's goin' to speak out what we think. You'd ought to come to us an' took advice, fore you went to all them fullish expenses down South'—even Sennacherib hesitated before the fire of Hepzibah's eye. Then he concluded—bravely—'an' bought that lot.'

'I guess advice wouldn't paid my mortgage. I guess I shouldn't got anythin' more but jest advice. It aint never helped folks much, 's fur as I know. I aint never come on my folks for nothin', an' I aint goin' to now. An' I aint goin' to talk no more about it.'

'H'm,' said her uncle rising, 'I guess thar aint nothin' more to talk about, 's fur 's I know. I guess your Aunt Elmiry an' me know that 's well 's you. Your Aunt Jane's over to Ware to-day, but she'd say the same if she was here.'

'Come an' see us, Hepsy,' faltered her aunt, as she followed her triumphant husband from the room. 'Your uncle means well. We sha'n't lay up nothin' against you.'

'Well.'

That evening Hepzibah slowly climbed the hill to the cemetery. The flowers she had planted were already blooming and flourishing. Her husband's grave was surrounded by a broad border, composed of three rows of flowers, one of pansies, one of white gillyflowers, one of pinks. A few commoner plants were

disposed, but without much arrangement, on the grassy strip beside Mr. Mason's grave, where her last resting-place would be made one day. The lot was surrounded by a low wooden railing, painted white, and already well draped in ivy. Hepzibah watered the plants carefully, then she took a little feather duster from her basket and dusted the ivy. She did not miss a leaf or a twig. When all was done, she put away her duster, folded her arms, and looked long at the grave.

Sennacherib, returning from the farm with his cart and oxen, saw the gaunt figure on the hill.

'Ef wimmen aint the fools!' he muttered. 'Gee! Haw! G'lang! Massy to me! Thar's Hepsy gone an' lost all the house she hed, for the sake of bein' the minister's widder, an' mighty glad to be married for an hour or so, to that peak'd, pinin' creetur, an' then luggin' the corpse up here when she might—yis, an' had ought to left it down in Georgy. Wal! . . . Gee! haw, Buck! Git along, ye darned creetur! Wal! thar's one comfort. She knows she's be'n a fool, now she's gone an' lost everythin'!'

While Sennacherib moralised, Hepzibah was whispering softly to herself. "'Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of thy days.'" It's fixed up nice his grave is, and my place right alongside. Wal, ef I hev lost everythin', I've got a real pretty lot, the best in the hull cemetery!'

M. L. T.

## READING A DICTIONARY.

What do you read, my lord?  
Words, words, words!

THERE is much good reading in a dictionary. Even where you find but an alphabetic list of words, with their meaning set over against them, like the terms of an equation, it appeals to the contemplative spirit; it moves imagination; it is like running one's fingers over the keys of a noble instrument, striking a chord here and there, evoking a bar or two of slumbering music.

But when, seeking perhaps for the delicate shades of meaning of some word, you have deposited before you the great armful of a book that ventures upon etymologies, and gives illustrative quotations from authors ancient and modern, the interest grows tenfold; you are lured pleasantly on from word to word, as a butterfly in a garden from flower to flower. What, then, shall we say of that monumental work, the *New English Dictionary*, catered for by legions of patient scholars—those myrmidons who have ranged, ant-like, for prey through the length and breadth of the language; and edited by their great Achilles, the indefatigable Murray? Here, at last, we shall have a dictionary which will be to all other English dictionaries as the British Museum Library to a private collection—a compendious history of English diction; a great organ wherein are marshalled in goodly rows all the stops of the English language. Henceforward an author shall have no excuse for the careless and unscholarly use of his mother tongue. To read a dictionary such as this is indeed a liberal education.

Yet, for the butterfly reader whose aim is imaginative pleasure, who would range in a moment from A to Z, sipping each word daintily like a wine, to taste the delicacy of its bouquet and flavour, the field it opens before him is somewhat too vast. It may, no doubt, present 'a feast of nectar'd sweets,' but it can scarcely be said that 'no crude surfeit reigns' therein. There are whole acres sown with those terms of modern science which appal the cursory reader, to whom his dictionary is, for the nonce, as some Blue or Yellow Fairy Book to a child, the gate of fairyland. For him the pages of old Johnson, so redolent of 'the Sage's' own burly personality, are more to his mind. Nevertheless, an occa-

sional plunge into this huge book, extensive as a jungle, and well arranged as a botanic garden, is not without its attractions. It reveals to the fitting reader his enormous ignorance; and, if ignorance be bliss, how enormous should be the bliss of that revelation!

Hamlet's irritable reply to Polonius: 'Words, words, words!' goes to the root of 'the matter that you read;' for words are 'the abstract and brief chronicle' of all human wisdom—and folly. Words are not merely, as has been said, 'fossil history;' they are fossil poetry, fossil science, or what you will. But, indeed, if they be fossils, they are such fossils as roots and earth-garnered seeds—things wherein the heart of life but slumbers. They are dried bulbs out of which will spring at the touch of imagination a lily or hyacinth; eggs of reptiles whence an asp may dart and sting. Do not some words look you honestly in the face? Do not others wriggle and lie? Are not some of ancient lineage, some of yesterday's creation; some pure-blooded, some but bastards; some courtiers, some plain yeomen; some grave with wisdom, some mere pedants; one a ribald jester, one a more dainty humourist; each with his own rôle in the tragi-comedy of the mind's evolution?

Open your Johnson at haphazard and run your eyes down the page. What arrests you? *Speech*, *speed*, and *spell*, all threads of the homespun woof of the language. The *sortes Johnsonianæ* have given us no ill-omened text. The first word, *speech*, echoes through the caverns of memory, and brings to mind that majestic Nineteenth Psalm:

'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork.

'Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.'

There is no lyrical poetry of such divine quality in any other literature. It is so nobly sensuous in its spirituality, so sublimely spiritual in its sensuousness. The men who wrote these Psalms lived like children in the perpetual presence of God; not blindly and dumbly as we do, but seeing and singing. They rose up and lay down in the Lord; they rejoiced, they sorrowed, they wept unto the Lord. They sinned full in His sight, guilelessly as children, and like children repented before Him, and came crying to Him to be made good and comforted, when the froward fit was past: for was not He their Heavenly Father, knowing their frame and remembering that they were dust? 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of

Glory shall come in !' Were not these old singers the gates and everlasting doors by which the King of Glory entered into His sanctuary, the human heart, and man first beheld the majesty of God, and the beauty of holiness ?

*Speed* is also a good word by the wayside of life. What better word to hear when a loyal friend grips your hand as you falter at the foot of the 'Hill Difficulty,' and gives you a hearty 'God speed' ? Very pleasantly, too, it greets you in field or hedgerow, in its compound form *Speedwell*, the workday name of that flower which, with its deep-blue or 'clear germander' eye, seeming to reflect the hue of the skies after a sunshiny shower, peeps all the summer long from the shadowy grass. The old herbalists often had gracious fancies in their naming of plants. It was, moreover, a pious thought of the more learned botanist who gave the blue-eyed flower her saint's name of Veronica, which saw in this heaven-gazing child of the fields a type of the sympathetic virgin who caught on her 'vernicle,' as Chaucer calls it, an impress of the Saviour's face as He passed on His destined way from the solitary agony of Gethsemane to the public ignominy of Golgotha.

To pass from plants and flowers to spells is an easy transition, for the powers of the plant have of old been connected in imagination with the influences of the planet, and both with those mysterious potencies of nature which have held the human spirit in awe, and tempted sorcerers to woo the gods of darkness with unhallowed rites. This word *spell* is fraught with all the poetry of what the scientist calls 'superstition.' But Poetry is the elder sister of Science, and not to be excommunicated by her. Like Love, if thrust out at the door, she will fly back through the window. And why, may one ask, should our scientists be so supercilious over the superstitions of their predecessors in groping after truth ? For, to quote Bacon, 'there is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go farthest from the superstition they formerly received.'

The word *superstition* itself is a curious one. How did it come to carry the weight of meaning that has been thrust upon it ? It comes from *super*, over, and *sto*, I stand, and literally means a standing over. Now, if it stands, it must surely—and here, I hope, is sound logic—have at least one leg to stand on, whatever the men of science may say ; and something which may serve as a rest for the sole of its foot—that 'whereon to stand'—demanded by the old mechanist when he desired to move the

world. Now superstitions *have* moved the world, *argal* they must have found a *ποῦ στῶ*, albeit that may have been a mere piece of human nature, the stuff that dreams are made of. That was a fine epigrammatic definition of faith given by a well-instructed modern child: 'Believing what you know isn't true;' though, for scientific purposes, it is somewhat too narrow. That robust faculty of the mind which we call faith, in believing what it desires to find true, does not necessarily believe what is not true, but what is not proven. Superstition itself is an *Aberglaube*, a but-after-all belief—a belief in spite of the marshalling against it of those pieces of imagination crystallised by experience which we call facts. A superstition may be but the fantastic looming up of a truth which may yet appear in a less distorted form, and be what we call proven. Yet many delightful imaginations remain unproven, and are likely to remain so.

Here is a digression! But what of that? One of the charms of reading a dictionary, indeed its most fascinating charm, is that it inevitably leads to that volatile discourse of reason which induces healthy respiration in the mind. Enter into conversation with any word of plump and attractive appearance—ay, or even one that seems at first sight but beggarly and ill-nourished; and you soon find yourself wandering in a circle whose centre is everywhere, and its circumference nowhere—a strayed reveller in the green pastures of imagination, beside the still waters of thought. We shall wander back to the dictionary, through some easy by-way, soon enough.

But our latter-day Science, to do her justice, is magnanimous. She has become a diligent student of superstitions: myths, folklore, primitive religion, rites, mysteries, ancient customs. She even begins herself to grow transcendental. She has 'conveyed' that mystical concept of the old alchemists, the *Mysterium Magnum*; cutting its venerable hair and beard, robing it in a more modish dress, like Faust in the opera, and rebaptising it *ether*. She has reduced matter itself to a series of vortex-rings in this ether, and has come to hold that all the sensible qualities, by which we perceive the phenomenal world, are but translations from the language of those ethereal vibrations wherein the universe exists into the language of consciousness. Those telegraphic clerks, the nerve-ends, forward the vibratory message from the palpitating something outside us; those poets, the special senses, amuse us with their free and easy paraphrase of that message into fairy

tales about feelings and sounds, colours and odours, and other things, delightful or undelightful. The scientist thus comes to the same general conclusion as that of the mystic: *Vida es sueño*—Life's a dream. They differ as to the significance of this dream; and our dream-world rings with the controversy between them.

But when we come to think about a criterion of ultimate truth, we are in danger of being swept away by thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls. And, indeed, three or four words out of the mighty hosts that range the forests or highways of English speech have led us far in our pursuit of them. Let us leave speculation and get back to the solid earth.

This word *earth* is a good and comfortable one to come back to, and find rest for the foot of one's soul; and now, not this time plunging between the well-worn leathern covers of Johnson, let us see what our myrmidons have laid up for us in their New English granary.

Here is a whole history, in some two or more closely printed pages. And, first, we must abandon that obvious and plausible derivation which connected the word with the root *ar*, to plough. We must not, for the future, follow Thomas Carlyle in ringing changes on the notion that our ancestors regarded the earth as the thing that was *eared*, or ploughed, and named it accordingly. There is, however, a word of similar spelling derived from the root *ar*; which word *earth* is equivalent to *earing*, and means first a ploughing, secondly a ploughed land, and thirdly a crop. This is noted as obsolete. I don't know that even William Morris has given it a place among the refurbished *bric-à-brac* of his Kelmscott-press English.

It was a kindly labour of that alert craftsman in many mysteries, that Hercules of many labours, as one of the holiday tasks of his untiring energy, to wrestle with Death, or his twin-brother Oblivion, for such a host of old words and meanings, and bring them back from their long sleep among the poppies of Elysium. But it is hard for things that have once dwelt by the dull waters of Lethe to shake off the pale trick of sleep. It is not enough to uproot words and phrases from their native soil in many different climatic conditions of the language, and plant them in pretty patterns in your ornamental borders; they must be cautiously acclimatised.

The industrious compilers of the *New English Dictionary* have discovered no less than fifteen different shades of meaning



for the word *earth*, and tabulate these with illustrative quotations whereon the reader may contemplatively browse. Among these, we find Imagination walking the earth as a flat surface; boring into it, to hide with a fox or 'badgerde' in his *earth*; scooping a grave in the *churche-earth*; tilling it as soil for crops; taking a bird's-eye view of a country and calling it an *earth*; flying with it through space, when the great globe itself was discovered to be but a petty planet after all, and, as old Culpepper, astrologer and herbalist, who wrote in the first half of the seventeenth century, cynically expresses it: 'a great lump of dirt rolled up together and hanged in the air.' Then, as one of the alchemic elements, the word became a kind of conjurer's egg, out of which a hundred symbolic meanings might be extracted on occasion; while in modern chemistry an *earth* is but a metallic oxide.

So much for words which may be encountered every day along the beaten track of literature. To make excursions into the backwoods, the deserted cities, the lost ruralities of English speech; to visit the holy places of the priest, the dens of philosophic idol-makers, the laboratories of science, the workshops of the artisan, the barracks of the soldier, the fo'c'sle of the sailor, the solitary haunts or merry meetings of sportsmen, would be a matter of much time and patience. Fancy would come back with drooping wing, Thought would lie down footsore, before we had done much in the way of exploration. Yet even on their dosses in the casual wards of a slang dictionary one might come upon interesting personalities, quick-witted words that would serve as guides into strange regions of the human mind.

A flight or two, however, will not leave us quite foredone. The letter A alone is a Royal Aquarium, where you may undergo at least ten hours of enjoyment; but, blessed be whatever saint is the patron of dictionaries, you are not bound to wait for every 'turn'!

To the cursory reader of the dictionary it would seem that in the great British army of words there are more foreigners than natives. They work, no doubt, for the men of science at a cheaper expenditure of brain-force than our sturdy Saxons. They are easily compounded from their various roots, and convenient for definition, but without much charm for the reader. Though they smatter of classic learning, they are pedants, not poets; they have not drunk from the fount of Aganippe on Mount Helicon.

But the regiment headed by each letter has its own specific characteristics as to derivation. A is bombasted out with Greek

*anas, amphis, apos*, and Latin *abs* and *ads*. B is more Saxon, with such homely words as *bake, bed, blood, boat, bold, bow, break, breathe, brother*. C is heavy with polysyllabic spoils from the classical tongues, especially Latin, but has a sprinkling of Celtic words, as *cairn, car, claymore*; also a great number of words pilfered from barbarous peoples all over the world, such as *canoe* (Haytian), *caoutchouc* (Carib), &c. *Cross* came not directly from the Latin, but by a roundabout route through Irish and Norse. D is a well-bred and craftsmanlike letter, of old Teutonic stock allied with French. It contains such serviceable and pleasant English words as *date, deck, deed, dell, dough, dyke*, with the old French *dig* (ousting the old English *delve*) and *dub*. It gives us the *delight* which may have come to our sad skies with the romance poetry of the sunny South, and the *duty* which, being Anglo-French, is native to the soil of England. E is an English letter, daintily Frenchified with such words as *eager, eagle, ease, escutcheon, esquire*. But, like most letters, it has a good smattering of Greek and Latin. Indeed, under its Saxon *eaves* you may collect specimens of almost *every* kind of *etymology*. F is a fine old English gentleman of a letter, with many words whose roots are in the primitive stuff of the language. Like B and D, it contains many homely words of one syllable, such as *fade, fair, faith, fall, farm*, &c. G, in its first section, begins as a well of English undefiled, but it has not yet got as far as *geography*. The other letters may be left until their history is given in subsequent numbers of the dictionary.

A glance down the regimental roll of A shows that it is very full of those wizardlike words, derived from Semitic sources, which seem to pace in grave majesty, with turbaned heads, through the throng of every-day chaffers—Arabic and Hebrew terms of alchemy, magic, and astrology. These begin to appear in groups when we get to the syllable *al*, equivalent to *the*. Then the beautiful lightning-like Arabic characters frequently flash on the eye. *Alchemy* itself is but the Arabic *al* tacked on to the Greek *chemia*, transmutation, derived from the Egyptian Khem, the generative god of the black fertile alluvial earth, which, as distinguished from the barren sand, was felt to be the great transmuter of dead things to living—the less to the more precious. When the word is spelt *alchemy*, the first *y* connects it with a different root, *chumeia*, a pouring or infusion. This seems to have been the earlier form of the word, the art of making infusions coming in with boiling water, while that of transmutation only

came in with the refining of metals, and the form *alchemy* with the crucibles and sublimations of the Alexandrian school of magic. Our modern chemists, in affecting the *e*, rightly avow themselves the descendants of the old transmuters. They may leave the word *chymist*, with a *y*, to denote the more ancient mystery of the apothecary, or medicine-man. Both forms of the word have a fascinating smack of sorcery.

Many names of stars are Arabic, but the big dictionary seems to shut its doors in the face of the fixed stars. Only one inconsiderable twinkler in the horns of the ram, Alnath, mentioned by Chaucer, has managed to squeeze himself in among obsolete words under A; while such celestial notorieties as Aldebaran, whose brilliancy is one of the attractions of the sign of the bull, and Algol, the demon star, who waltzes nightly with his dark-eyed consort at the hostelry of Perseus, are excluded; though, under C, Canopus, that star which Cleopatra's lamps outburned when she and Antony had 'drunk the sun to sleep,' is permitted to shine. Why is this? And why, by the way, is Aphrodite absurdly described as 'the Grecian Venus,' and marked as 'not naturalised,' except by the naturalists as a 'sea-mouse' and a species of meerscham? Alas, poor goddess!

Some words of Arab lineage have a curious history. *Alcohol* was originally the finely powdered antimony used in staining the long lashes of the beauties of the hareem, 'the Kohol's jetty dye' of Moore; hence any powder obtained by sublimation; lastly, a distilled fluid or quintessence. *Algebra* meant the restoration or reunion of broken parts, and was first applied to the art of bonesetting.

That splendid word *alcahest*, the universal solvent, the letters of which seem to radiate magic, is said to have been invented by Paracelsus, in imitation of the Arabic.

*Anecdote* is a naturalised Greek word, with a story about how it came to mean a story. By derivation it means something unpublished; in which sense Procopius used *anecdota* as a title for his stories about the private life of the court of Justinian and Theodora, characterised by Gibbon as 'malignant.' They contained so many racy bits of scandal about the Emperor and Empress that the word *anecdote*, shedding his original skin of meaning, crept into fashion as a ready-witted retailer of gossip.

There are still a few English words left in the dictionary, even under A, some not yet obsolete. What could be more English than the word *ale*? It carries us back to the banquets of our dead ancestors in Walhalla, and some of its compounds open up vistas

into that old England which is fast disappearing, becoming a tale that is told, obsolete itself. Such are *alebush*, a tavern-sign; *ale-conner*, 'an officer appointed in every court-leet, and sworn to look to the assize and goodness of bread, ale, and beer.' *Ale-cost*, the name of a kind of tansy used to flavour the rustic's home-brewed, has a good old English look; yet, it bears witness to the mongrel nature of the speech of this mongrel nation—*cost* being from the Greek *kostos*, a savoury herb of species unidentified. *Alegar* is eager or sour ale, used as vinegar.

A *propos* of acids, there is an *angelic* acid, obtained from that most graceful of our umbelliferous plants, cultivated in England in the sixteenth century as a pot herb, and still used as a candied sweetmeat. From this 'herb angelick,' or 'root of the Holy Ghost,' whose fragrance was reputed good against poison and pestilence, was also distilled a perfume, charmingly named *angel-water*, affected by the beauties of the seventeenth century. 'I met,' says Sedley, 'the prettiest creature in New Spring-garden. Angel-water was the worst scent about her.'

The big word-book is not above collecting a specimen or two of American slang. Here is that polite expletive *all-fired*, a euphemism for *hell-fired*. American refinement, which does not disdain that most glaring kind of humour, the burlesque of things beautiful and sacred, sometimes shies at 'a good mouth-filling oath,' and, with a reverent irreverence, contents itself with a mere 'tarnation' or 'Great Scot!'

The letter A must have been compiled before the birth of Trilby, else how is it that there is here no mention of her sitting for 'the altogether'? But we have had enough of A, which would fain be the omega as well as the alpha of this desultory gossip, while there are scores of siren words calling from the pages headed by other letters.

Well, there is no compulsion to hear a word more than you care to hear. Clap to the covers of the big book and the spell is broken, the magic mirror curtained over, the tired reader is free. True, every letter might furnish matter for a tractate; but in reading a dictionary you are not bound to follow any straight road, but may wander at your own sweet will.

We are easily bored now-a-days, and the word *bore*, of unknown origin, is a late addition to the language—not being known before 1750, and only later acquiring the exact meaning it has now. In 1766, it seems to have meant either a long talk, or the superior person who had learnt the elegant art of *being* bored, from the

French, who were *ennuyés* at least a century before. Evelyn, in 1667, observed that we have no word which fully expresses the sense of *ennui*. Our word *annoy*, which dates from the fourteenth century, is indeed derived from the old French *annuier*, but does not express boredom exactly. *Boycott* is a still more recent addition to the language, its history and derivation being well known. Like many other recently coined words, it is already established as a root; for the language is still growing.

The word *cast* seems to have been used as a term of old gunnery in a sense not explained in the dictionary. Colonel Bellingham, who attended William as guide on his way to the Boyne, and was present at the battle, says in his manuscript journal (quoted by Sir William Wilde in his book on the Boyne and Blackwater): 'The cannon fir'd at *caste* all the morning, and our cannon dismounted two of the enemy's batteries.' Perhaps some expert in gunnery may be able to explain this use of the word.

A very modern piece of slang is that strange word *dude*, of unknown origin, but coming in 'with the æsthetic craze,' as new words appear with new phases of thought and fashion, no one knows how. It stands in the dictionary just above the Irish *dudheen*, which has, it seems, if the phrase may be permitted, become classic vernacular for a pipe, 'especially in the British colonies and U.S.' These symbolic initials, I am happy to say, I understand; unlike most of those puzzlingly abbreviated references to obscure authors given in the book, which seem designed to induce in the cursory reader an abiding sense of his own ignorance. Who or what was 'Torr. Portugal'? How many of us know anything of Mahn's great work, 'Etym. Unt.'?

The dictionary makers are no doubt less ignorant of Irish than most educated Irishmen; yet they attempt no etymology of this word *dudheen*. The generic word for a pipe in Irish is *picpa*; *dudheen* being the name of a species, a short clay, a 'cutty pipe.' A plausible derivation is that suggested by a competent Irish scholar, Mr. Flannery: *dubh-aid-in*, a double diminutive of *dubh*, black—'a little black thing.'

*Fetch*, in the sense of a 'double,' a phantasm of the living, though spelt in the same way, would appear to have a different origin from that of the old English word *fetch*. May it not be the Irish word for a ghost, *thive-shee*, contracted to *thesha*, its aspirated *t* passing into an *f*, as *thrid-a-ceile* is in the West of Ireland pronounced *frid-a-ceile*? I am again indebted to Mr. Flannery for this suggestion. The word, in the sense of an apparition

tion of oneself to oneself, is much more common in Ireland than elsewhere. Banim, in the O'Hara Tales, defines it as 'the supernatural facsimile of some individual, which comes to ensure to its original a happy longevity or immediate dissolution; if seen in the morning, the one event is predicted; if in the evening, the other.' In Rossetti's design, the lovers must have met themselves in the evening, for they seem on the point of 'immediate dissolution.'

One word more, and then the closure. *Farm*, though supposed to be from the mediæval *firma*, a fixed payment connected with *firmary*, to fix, settle, confirm, is a good old English word to end with. It meant originally 'food, provision, hence a banquet.' Then it came to mean a fixed rent in money or kind; hence, a lease, and the tract of land held on lease. It is thus a word of long descent adopted in the youth of the language; a word with a history closely connected with that of the nation, and racy of the soil. It brings with it an aroma of rural life in the open air, before the cities began to swell like overgrown spiders, each sitting in the centre of its web of iron rails, sucking the blood of the country; an aroma of ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, baking, brewing, dairying—all those homely arts of old-fashioned agriculture and country housewifery. The very word expands in imagination into an English Georgic, 'full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing;' bringing with it glimpses of English landscape like those in *L'Allegro*, where one might walk with Milton:

not unseen  
By hedgerow, elms, on hillocks green,  
While the ploughman, near at hand,  
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,  
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,  
And the mower whets his scythe.

And now, shut the dictionary—shut it sternly at once, as good children do, who, resisting temptation, break off in the very middle of a fairy tale, and with virtue more than heroic go off to bed. May *farm* prove an *antephiatic* against a nightmare of words! But, following the example of the old Irish poets, who often ended their songs with the same phrase they used at the beginning, I say again—and I trust the reader may meet me with a smile of *apocha*, or acquittance, rather than an *anthypophora*, or counter-statement—there is much good reading in a dictionary.

JOHN TODHUNTER.

THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW.

BY ONE OF THE OLD GUARD.

As a drama, the career of Napoleon is marked by a simplicity worthy of the Greek stage. There is no mystery, no elaborate plot of wheels within wheels. The ambition of one man in whom supreme ability is seconded by equally supreme contempt, down to the smallest details, for all those restraints to which under the names of honour and morality civilised mankind has agreed to submit, runs a triumphant course for some twenty years;<sup>1</sup> the catastrophe is immediate and complete almost in a moment of time; and the downfall is accomplished in little more than a tenth of the period occupied by the rise. The succession of *hubris*, *atè*, *nemesis* is as regular as Æschylus himself could have imagined. When will the dramatist arise who shall be capable of dealing with it?

Meantime material is pouring in for a hundred lesser works. The writer of play or novel has to do little but transcribe; all the rest is done for him by the facts, set forth as they have been by half a hundred hands, all endowed with the French gift for telling narration. We had occasion about a year ago to draw the attention of our readers to the modest memoirs of an obscure general of brigade. That simple narrative, as we showed, was as full of hairbreadth escapes and plucky actions as the most jaded reader of adventurous fiction could demand, and had the merit, not always possessed by more elaborate works, of entire self-unconsciousness. One had just the every-day life of one of Napoleon's officers. Even an officer's experiences, however, hardly tell us what war means to the 'dim, unconsidered population' upon whom the real brunt of it falls; the units who compose the battalions, which in their turn are the pieces in the game, and, like the pieces, have little or no share in the stakes.

So far as we are aware, no record has as yet been brought to light to tell the personal experiences of any of the ultimate atoms (which we take to be the privates in the line regiments) com-

<sup>1</sup> Chè dove l'argomento della mente  
S'aggiunge al mal voler ed alla possa,  
Nessun riparo vi può far la gente.



posing the great army that entered Russia on June 25, 1812, and never, as an army, left that country again, unless the 'Prussian Dragoon,' quoted by Mitchell, comes under that head. Recent research has, however, gone a long way in this direction. In 1867 there died at Valenciennes a veteran of eighty-two, named Bourgogne, who, as a private and sergeant in the Imperial Guard, had taken part in fifteen battles, beginning with Jena and ending with Bautzen. Being a man of some education—his father was a tradesman of Condé on the extreme north-east frontier of France—he had kept journals and put together reminiscences, it would seem, to a considerable extent. Portions of these, dealing with the retreat from Moscow, were published in a more or less 'edited' form during his lifetime—some forty years ago—in an obscure local paper, but attracted no particular attention. The paper died a natural death, and only one file of it seems to exist. Of the *tirage à part* only two copies are known. The MS., however, is preserved in the library of Valenciennes, where it was discovered by M. Paul Cottin, editor of the *Nouvelle Revue Rétrospective*; who has now made the authentic text of Sergeant Bourgogne's memoirs accessible to all the French-reading world. We understand that an English translation of the book is in preparation; and it may safely be said that in all the vast mass of Napoleonic literature which the last decade has produced, there has been no work which ought better to repay the translator's labour.

When in March 1812 the order to start for Russia reached Bourgogne's regiment, it was on its way towards Almeida in Portugal, a fortress from which the French had been expelled in the previous year. Forty-eight hours were all the rest that was allowed them in Paris, and on June 25, as has been said, they crossed the Niemen. The march to Moscow is related very briefly. The Imperial Guard took very little part in the severe fighting at Smolensk, Valoutina, Borodino, which cost the French army some 50,000 men before the goal was attained. At Borodino especially, for some reason which has never been clearly explained, and in spite of repeated requests from Murat, who was at one time very hard pressed, Napoleon refused to send the Guard forward, or let a man of that fine corps come into action. In the rest of the army the carnage was tremendous. During the march up, Bourgogne had received one evening an invitation from a number of young men, drummers in the 61st Regiment,

all belonging to his native town of Condé, to join them in a carouse, the materials of which were obtained from a Russian general's stores, which they had been lucky enough to capture. A few days after Borodino, he came across one of the party, with his arm in a sling.

I went up to him, asking how our friends were. 'Very well,' he replied, tapping the ground with the butt of his musket. 'They are all dead, on the field of honour, as the saying is, and buried in the great redoubt. They were all killed by grape, while beating the "charge." Ah, sergeant, I shall not forget that battle! What a slaughter it was! But let us sit down and talk about our poor comrades, and that Spanish girl, our *cantinière*.'

The Spanish *cantinière* had been under the protection of the drum-major, 'en tout bien, tout honneur,' as that worthy had remarked, with his hand on his rapier. When introducing Bourgogne on the occasion of the festivity, the narrator continued that, having got a bullet in his arm, he was going to the field-hospital to have it extracted, but had not gone a hundred steps when he met the Spanish girl in tears. Some wounded men had told her of the fate of the drummers, and the brave girl was going to see if she could be of any help.

'When we had got near the great redoubt, and she saw the field of slaughter, she began to shriek dismally. But it was another thing when she saw the smashed drums. She was like a woman beside herself. "Here, here, friend; here they are," she screamed. And there they were lying, sure enough; limbs smashed, bodies torn by the grapeshot. Like a madwoman she went from one to another, speaking tenderly to them. But none heard, though a few still showed signs of life; among them being the drum-major—her father as she called him.

'She stopped by him, and dropping on her knees raised his head, to pour a few drops of brandy into his mouth. Just then the Russians made a movement to recapture the redoubt, and the firing recommenced. Suddenly the Spanish girl gave a cry of pain. She had been struck by a bullet, which had smashed her left thumb and entered the shoulder of the dying man whom she was supporting. She sank down in a faint; I tried to raise her, to carry her back to safety, but having only one available arm, I had not the strength to do it. Luckily a dismounted cuirassier came by. Without waiting to be asked, and only saying, "Come along quick, for it is not good here"—and in truth, the cannon-balls were whistling round our ears—he picked up the girl, and carried her off like a child, still unconscious. . . . M. Larrey, the Emperor's surgeon, amputated her thumb, and extracted my bullet very neatly.' That (adds Bourgogne) was what I heard from Dumont, the Condé lad, corporal in the light company of the 61st. I never heard any more of him. And this was the end of twelve young men from Condé.

Is not the conclusion quite Herodotean in its simplicity? And indeed, the whole tale, the girl going into the fire to help her friends, the wounded corporal turning back to look after her, the cuirassier stopping among the cannon-balls to see them both safe

out of the place, is as pretty a little tale of unpretentious heroism as one often meets with.

The five weeks which some infatuation led Napoleon to waste in Moscow, passed agreeably enough for the Imperial Guard. The fire which broke out an hour after their entrance does not seem to have incommoded them very seriously; nor does Bourgogne attach so much importance as most historians have done to its effect on the ultimate issue of the enterprise.

Many people (he says) who were not in this campaign, say that the burning of Moscow meant the loss of the army. I and many others thought the contrary; for the Russians might very well have abstained from setting the town on fire, but have carried off all the provisions, or thrown them into the Moskwa, and ravaged the country for ten leagues all round—not a difficult thing to do, for part of it is desert—and by the end of a fortnight we must have gone. After the fire there were still dwellings enough to quarter the whole of the army; and even if they had been burnt, there were the cellars.

Perhaps it would, after all, have been better for them if they had been forced to decamp at the end of a fortnight.

The amount of provisions left in the city was indeed prodigious; and the grenadiers of the Guard obtained their full share. Bourgogne, with five of his comrades, took up his quarters in a deserted house. They had, he says, as their store of drinkables for the winter seven large cases of champagne, plenty of Spanish wine and port, and 500 bottles of rum. Of solid edibles, they had quantities of hams and salt fish, and several sacks of flour. At this time they seem to have thought it possible that they might spend the winter in Moscow. Furs of all kinds and skins of all animals were at their disposal, to say nothing of Indian shawls and silks. 'It is well to mention,' he adds, 'that we non-commissioned officers levied a tax of at least 20 per cent. on all articles which had escaped the fire.' However, this was not to last.

On the evening of October 18, a party of us non-commissioned officers were together as usual, stretched like pashas on skins of ermine, sable, lion, bear, and other not less precious furs, smoking Indian scented tobacco out of elegant pipes, while a huge jorum of rum punch blazed in our midst, in a great silver bowl belonging to some Russian boyard. We were just talking about France, and how pleasant it would be to go back as conquerors after several years' absence, when we heard a loud uproar in the large saloon where the men of the company slept. At the same moment, in came the quartermaster-sergeant of the week with the news that, in obedience to orders, we were to get ready to start.

Before they had marched very far, it struck Bourgogne that his knapsack was a trifle heavy, and he proceeded to take stock

of the contents. Besides provisions and articles of clothing—a miscellaneous collection, including a Chinese lady's costume of silk embroidered with gold—he had two silver plaques, embossed with mythological subjects, a Russian prince's order set with brilliants, a fragment from the silver casing of the great cross of St. Ivan, and other unconsidered trifles, snapped up in the town where, according to one story, Napoleon had told Mortier that he would hold him responsible with his head for pillage.

The rank and file seem to have had an impression, derived perhaps from the southerly direction in which the army commenced its retreat, that their next stage was to be a march 'to Mongolia and China, to get hold of the English possessions in India.' If they so fancied, they were quickly undeceived, for before a week was out Kutusoff had headed them off from Kalouga, and compelled them to follow the devastated track of their former march. It was at the very moment when Napoleon, convinced that the southern road was closed to him, was starting to rejoin the route of his advance, that he had the narrowest escape from capture that befell him in the whole campaign. Bourgonne was an eye-witness of this incident, which has often been related; he had indeed been all night on guard near the house in which Napoleon lodged. The morning of October 25 was foggy. The Emperor mounted early and rode off into the mist, attended only by his staff. Suddenly the Cossack *hourra* was heard; some squadrons of the cavalry of the Guard dashed off into the plain, followed by the infantry. They came up just in time to deliver the Emperor, whom they found nearly surrounded by Cossacks, generals and staff-officers fighting hand to hand with the adventurous enemy. It was here that the unlucky Major Lecoulteux, an aide-de-camp of Berthier's, having disarmed a Cossack, was returning triumphantly with the captured lance in his hand, when a mounted grenadier, seeing as he thought a Cossack officer in too close proximity to Napoleon's person, rode at him and ran him through. Perceiving the mistake too late, he dashed into the midst of the enemy, hoping to atone for his blunder by getting killed, but the Cossacks fled before him, and he had to come back in despair. However, all the authorities, including Bourgonne, agree that Lecoulteux recovered from his wound.

Two days later, on October 27, Mojaïsk, on the former line of march, was reached; and, notes Bourgonne, *it began to freeze*. By the 30th the roads had become bad; baggage-waggons stuck

fast or broke down, and plunder began to be disgorged. 'The road was strewn with valuable articles, pictures, candlesticks, quantities of books. For more than an hour I was picking up volumes, which I skimmed for a moment and threw away again, to be picked up in turn and thrown away by others. There were editions of Voltaire, of Rousseau, of Buffon's "Natural History," bound in red morocco with gilt edges.' A more useful find was a bearskin rug.

It was from this time that the real horrors of the retreat may be said to have begun. The provisions brought from Moscow, at all events such as were attainable by the rank and file, were exhausted, and horseflesh was becoming almost the only article of diet. If a man had secured a little rice or a few potatoes, he consumed his stores if possible out of sight, or, if of an unusually generous disposition, shared them surreptitiously with one or two intimate friends. Darker stories began to be told. One day Bourgogne, half by force, half by persuasion, had succeeded in persuading another soldier to 'spare' him seven half-cooked potatoes for the price of fifteen francs. As he walked on, lost in calculation as to the length of time he might prolong existence by the aid of this addition to his supplies, he missed the road.

I first found out that I was astray (he says) by the yells and oaths of five men who were fighting like dogs; beside them was a leg of horse, which was the bone of contention. On seeing me, one of them came up to me, saying that he and his comrade, belonging to the transport service, had with some others been killing a horse behind the wood. As they were returning with their share to their bivouac they had been set upon by three men of another regiment, who wanted to take it from them; but if I would help them to defend it, they would give me some. Fearing the same fate for my potatoes, I told them I could not stop, but if they would hold their own for a moment, I would send them some help, and so went on.

I had not gone far when I met two men of our regiment, and told them all about it. They went off in that direction. Next day I heard that when they reached the spot they found only a dead man, just despatched with a bludgeon of firwood, which they found lying by him stained with blood. Probably the three assailants had taken advantage of the moment when one was imploring my aid to get rid of the other, who remained alone.

Of the cases of cannibalism said by many writers to have occurred during the retreat, Bourgogne does not profess to speak as an eye-witness. He mentions, however, an incident of which he and some of his companions were informed by two soldiers whom they fell in with, and who, as he remarks, would have no inducement to invent the story. A farmhouse, in which a number of officers

and men had sought shelter for the night, took fire, and many of the inmates perished. The men in question affirmed that they had seen some Croat soldiers pull a roasted body from the fire, cut it up and devour it. 'I believe,' adds Bourgogne, 'that this happened more than once in the course of this disastrous campaign, though I did not see it.' Elsewhere he, or one of his friends, refers almost with equanimity to the possibility of being compelled to resort to this horrible expedient for sustaining life.

Smolensk, which they reached on November 9, though the former passage of the army had left it little more than a mass of blackened ruins, was eagerly hailed as a haven of temporary rest; some indeed had cherished a vain hope that they might wait there till spring. Here a little flour and some biscuit was served out, of which the famished men ate with such avidity that many became ill. Discipline was almost entirely relaxed, and an organised system of pillage was set up within the army. A band of thieves, French, German, Italian, would combine to march together, well in advance of the main body. On reaching the assigned halting-place, they would separate, and on the arrival of the army at nightfall, would emerge from their hiding-places and prowl round the bivouacs, picking up a horse here, some baggage there, and so forth. Bourgogne, sallying out one night at Smolensk in search of a comrade, lost his way, and rolled down a bank into a cellar which was tenanted by one of these gangs.

I was still dazed with my fall, and had not picked myself up, when an individual rose at the far end of the cellar, and set light to some straw to get a better view of me. Catching sight of the Imperial Eagle on my shako, he called out in a jeering tone, 'Aha! Imperial Guard! Out you go!' and the rest took up the cry. I begged them, as chance had thrown me among them, to let me stay till morning. But the one who had first risen, and who seemed the leader, having at his side a broadsword which he took care to display with some affectation, repeated that I was to go out, and that at once; the rest joining in the chorus. A German made as though to lay hands on me, but with a push in the chest I sent him sprawling over some others who were still lying down, and laid my hand on the hilt of my sabre, for my musket had remained behind when I rolled down. The man with the sword applauded the spill I gave the fellow who wanted to turn me out, telling him that it was no business of a cabbage-headed German to lay hands on a Frenchman.

Encouraged by this approbation, Bourgogne pleaded once more for a night's hospitality, his request being seconded by one of two women who were with the gang. This was again refused, on the avowed ground that his presence might interfere with their plans for marauding; but he was allowed to stay and warm

himself for half an hour. Presently, however, the woman who had stood his friend advised him to make his escape while he could, and he went out. He recovered his musket, which he had dropped in his fall; but, being unable in the darkness to find his way up the bank, he was forced to wait till one of the gang came out. The man made no objection to guiding him past some ruined houses to a flight of steps, by which the road along the ramparts could be regained, but, on reaching it, made him take several turns, under pretext of showing him his way, so as to puzzle him as to the locality of the den from which he had escaped. He did return, however, with some friends next morning; but 'the birds had flown,' and all they found was some empty trunks and Bourgogne's German assailant of the previous night dead drunk.

His adventures for that night did not end with his escape from the den of thieves. As, with a frost-bitten foot, he made his way painfully through the snow, stumbling now over a deserted gun-carriage, now over a corpse, once stopping just in time to avoid a fall from the top of the ramparts into the Dnieper, which flowed in a turbid, icy stream at their foot, he became, or fancied he became, aware of music like the notes of an organ floating in the air. Just then a heavier fall than usual, over the body of a dead dragoon, caused him to utter a cry of pain. It was answered by a shout at no great distance; and, making his way towards the sound, Bourgogne found to his joy that it proceeded from a friend of his—one Beloque, a sergeant in the same corps—keeping guard over two sick men, who, unable to go further, were awaiting the bearers for whom he had sent. To him he recounted the adventure of the cellar. 'But,' he adds, 'I did not dare to say anything about the music, lest he should say I was ill.' The pair walked up and down, their conversation broken at times by the death-rattle from one or another of the sick men, when suddenly the ærial music began to sound again, this time appearing to be much nearer at hand. Beloque said, in a whisper, lest the dying men should overhear—a curious touch of the courtesy which a Frenchman, if he has time to think, seldom forgets—'It is very like the music of the dead. All is dead around us, and I have a presentiment that in a few days I shall be dead too. Well, God's will be done. But one might die with less suffering. Look at those poor fellows.' 'I made no answer,' says the narrator, 'but my thought was the same as his.'



For a while they listened in silence, disturbed only by the laboured breathing of one of the sick men. The sounds seemed to proceed from overhead. Presently they ceased, and with a plaintive cry the other man drew his last breath. The bearers came up, and the survivor was taken away. Bourgogne and his friend went with the party; but the former soon left them, and went in quest of another comrade. At once the mysterious music began again, and, following it, he arrived at a building all lighted up. This proved to be a church. Climbing over the low church-yard wall, and crossing some ground, which seemed strangely uneven till he perceived that it was strewn with corpses lying under a covering of snow, the sergeant reached the doorway. The door was open, and volumes of smoke issued from it. The interior was also thick with smoke, amid which men were singing and playing the organ; but this presently cleared as the flame of the fire burnt up; and one of the singers recognised Bourgogne, and greeted him. They turned out to be men of his own company, all more or less drunk. Some of them, being on fatigue duty, had seen two Jews emerging from a cellar. Marking the spot, they had returned, found some brandy and some food, as well as some fur pelisses. Having noted the church as a convenient shelter, they were 'making a night of it,' with the aid of their plunder. Some bandsmen had got into the organ-loft, and it was their performances on the instrument that had caused the melodious sounds whereby Bourgogne and his friend had been so sorely perplexed. Others had torn down the woodwork to make a fire, using, among other materials, some of the stairs to the organ-loft, whereby one of the unlucky bandsmen, waking from a drunken sleep by the organ, and attempting to descend, 'got a fall which incapacitated him from marching for some time. Probably he never came home.' The whole scene is one of the grimmest, not to say gruesomest, Hogarthian humour.

Krasnoi was the next stage after Smolensk. Here the Russian army barred the passage, and some sharp fighting ensued, in which poor Beloque's forebodings as to his own fate were verified. Ultimately the Russians gave way so far as to allow the fugitives to enter the town, but remained closely in touch with them. The Guard, which had started 35,000 strong, was by this time, though it had been less engaged than any other corps, dwindled to 7,000 or 8,000. At Orza, Ney, who had been covering the

retreat, rejoined, with two or three thousand men, all that were left to represent the 70,000 originally under his command.

The action at Krasnoi, though technically a victory for the French—'opimus fallere et effugere est triumphus'—achieved the demoralisation of their army. 'Till then,' says Bourgonne, 'I had been pretty cheerful and superior to all the weight of our miseries. The more of danger and trouble, I thought, the more of honour and glory. My comrades were astounded at my patience. But after Krasnoi, and the loss of many friends'—the sentence remains incomplete, as though the veteran's pen had faltered before the mere remembrance of that terrible time. From that time, stragglers arriving at a bivouac after dark would call out the name not of their regiment but of their army corps; and sometimes, in order to find even their corps, or what remained of it, they were forced to wander about half the night. One day, about this time, the fragments of the Guard regiments were suddenly ordered to form square.

At that moment the Emperor came by, with Murat and Eugène. He took up his position in the centre of the grenadiers and *chasseurs*, and then made them an allocation with reference to the situation, informing them that the Russians were awaiting us at the passage of the Beresina, and had sworn that not a man of us should recross it. Then, drawing his sword, and raising his voice, he exclaimed: 'Let us on our side swear to die with arms in our hands rather than not see France again.' The oath was taken straightway.

In other words, 'If the Russians think that by shooting you they will prevent me getting back to France, they are much mistaken.' When the Beresina was reached a few days later, and the bridges had been thrown across, Napoleon, with a strong escort, crossed at his ease. This was on November 27; and so well had he kept in advance of the throng, that no one crossed the bridge all that night, and even at seven o'clock on the following morning, when Bourgonne himself crossed, he had the bridge all to himself. During the past four or five days, having in the confusion lost sight of his regiment, or the handful of comrades who still represented it among what had been

Hier la Grande Armée, et maintenant troupeau,

he had made his way as best he could, partly alone, partly in company with an old friend belonging, like himself, to the Guard, who had also lost his way, and upon whom by great good fortune he had lighted. This man, Picart by name, and a Picard by origin, was a cheery soul; and his companionship was the salvation of

Bourgogne, who by this time was losing not only his spirits but his health.

The adventures of the two friends as they traversed the vast forest which lies to the east of the Beresina, are perhaps the most original and most interesting part of the book. Space, alas! forbids us to recount here the thrilling narrative: how they skirmished for the best part of a day with a squad of Cossacks, and had not the worst of it, killing several of their opponents and capturing a horse; how, safely hidden themselves, they watched a convoy of prisoners go past under the escort of Tartars and Kalmucks, armed with spears and bows, commanded, fortunately for the prisoners themselves, by a French officer, one of the many *énigmes* in the Russian service; how Picart, under somewhat 'Zolaesque' circumstances, overheard one evening the conversation of two village gossips, and how, following the women's tracks in the snow, they reached a farmhouse inhabited by some Poles, who washed them, dressed their wounds, and gave them a good night's lodging; how some Germans tried to carry off their horse and roast him, but only got their heads punched by the energetic Picart; how, finally, they regained the route after three days' wandering, and saw the head of the column go by, composed of generals and officers, all who remained of the 'Sacred Battalion' formed but a day or two before, the Emperor following on foot with the marshals, a sight which caused two great tears to roll down Picart's cheeks, adding their burden to the icicles that hung from his moustaches—for all this readers must be referred to the book itself.

The scenes at the passage of the Beresina have been often enough described, but Bourgogne's account yields to none in horror. What he brings into especial prominence is the lack of organisation, which allowed the bridge to remain, as we have said, almost deserted for many hours, and so become disastrously crowded at the last moment by a panic-stricken throng flying from the Russian cannon-balls.

From the Beresina to Wilna, the misery was, if possible, greater than what had preceded. Dante has been credited with a lively imagination in the invention of horrors; but there were realities in those days which his ghastliest conceptions do not surpass. 'Ice formed in my nose,' says Bourgogne; 'my lips were glued together; the cold drew tears from my eyes, which froze till I was unable to see.' The torments assigned by the poet to those who set men at variance, were inflicted by a weapon

as keen as the demon's sword, and mutilated stumps, from which the hands and feet had dropped, were as common as in the ninth pit of Malebolge. Unluckily, the fortune of war does not always allot the penalties with the same regard to the law of retribution as poetic justice is able to arrange for. While the brave men to whose devotion and incredible exertions he owed his personal immunity from the sufferings which they endured almost without a murmur were left behind to perish, the arch-sower of strife was hastening away as fast as a well-appointed sledge could bear him. On December 5, Napoleon launched from Malodetchno the famous twenty-ninth bulletin, announcing the wreck of the army and his own personal safety; and made the best of his way in pursuit of it to Paris, administering a parting snub to one of his most faithful henchmen: 'I am quite aware that you are of no use,' he said to Berthier, who was with tears entreating to be allowed to share his flight, 'but people believe in you, and you must stay.'<sup>1</sup>

Yet what one can only call the infatuation of the soldier condoned even this. 'After Malet's conspiracy' (which had been successfully crushed weeks before), 'his presence was necessary in France, if only to organise a fresh army.' The few who ventured to raise their voices against the desertion by its chief of a wrecked army still pursued by an untiring foe, were set down as 'agents of England, coming among the army to preach defection.' Truly there are few problems in history so hard to solve as the secret of the fascination exercised by Napoleon over the mass of the soldiers. An army that could forgive the Russian campaign, one would say could forgive anything; but the strange thing is that to Bourgogne and his comrades, with rare exceptions, it never seems to have occurred that there was anything to be forgiven in the insane enterprise with its useless waste of valiant men. The reader of their simple narratives, not having the glamour in his eyes, may be excused if he takes a different view.

A. J. BUTLER.

<sup>1</sup> This is narrated by Marshal Castellane, who was at the Imperial headquarters at the time.

## MAKING MONEY.

### I.

#### TANTIFER'S HOUSE.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Howard Tantifer was merely on the fringe of my acquaintance, it interested me to hear of his approaching marriage.

'I cannot imagine,' said Lady Browne, 'what Maud Winstanley can see in the man. She hasn't any money, it is true, and is not much to look at, and is getting on, but still she is a lady—of a suburban kind—while that Tantifer is not a gentleman of any kind.'

'Not having money herself,' I suggested mildly, 'perhaps she appreciates its attractiveness in others.'

'Who says that Tantifer has money?'

'I am not his banker. Let us content ourselves with admitting that he gives the impression of owning a competence. Mr. Tantifer lives in a good house of his own, his establishment is comfortable, and he has no obtrusive debts. How do I know? Have not tradesmen tongues? What more than a competence could a lady—of a suburban kind—expect?'

'How does he get his money, Mr. Gatepath?' inquired my lady darkly.

I said that as he did no work outside his laboratory, except occasionally to make pretty silver ornaments for his friends, his income must be derived from investments.

'What investments?'

I remarked with some dryness that it was not customary, nor indeed expedient, to demand from one's acquaintances a list of their securities.

Lady Browne's face flamed. She is the senior partner in a Sheffield provision store, and knows that I know the detested truth.

When I left Lady Browne's house the afternoon was far advanced, and the time unsuitable for further calls. Nevertheless I presently found myself outside Mr. Tantifer's gate. I am commonly indifferent to the affairs of my neighbours, yet something

of mystery in my lady's manner stimulated me into curiosity regarding Mr. Tantifer. Besides, the reputed bride, Miss Maud Winstanley, was my old friend.

He enjoyed a good house. A comfortable warm detached house of which the bricks were clothed with a decent plaster. There had once been a moderate garden, but the laboratory which Tantifer had erected at the back of his residence crowded out the flower-beds. I estimated the rent at eighty pounds a year—I was standing in the Surrey suburb of Dulwich—and the price of the long leasehold at about 1,400*l*. After surveying the front of the villa for a few moments I strolled through the side entrance into the garden. Tantifer had constructed a laboratory of fine scientific ugliness. The naked yellow bricks were unplastered, and the small windows were fully twelve feet from the ground.

When I rang the front door bell the maidservant stated that Mr. Tantifer was engaged in his laboratory.

'Oh,' I replied easily; 'I am a friend. I will go in and speak to him.'

She stepped aside smiling. I walked down the passage to where I judged the laboratory entrance would be, and stopped in wonder before the door of a strong room. It was exactly the kind of door one finds in the cellars of a bank, warranted fire and burglar proof, by Messrs. Chubb.

'That's the laboratory,' observed the maid; 'no one goes in but the master, not even to clean up. Master sweeps it out himself, and throws the dust out of the window.'

She raised the mouthpiece of a speaking-tube with the object of establishing a communication with 'Master,' but I stopped her hand.

'No,' I said, 'I will not disturb Mr. Tantifer.'

Outside on the doorstep I encountered Maud Winstanley. She responded to my congratulations civilly enough, but could hardly be said to reveal much innocent enthusiasm or maidenly shyness. The young lady was pretty evidently bored, at least by congratulations.

Then I went home and carefully noted my curious experience, from which precaution the reader derives the foregoing exact description.

## II.

## TANTIFER'S WIFE.

THE marriage took place in due course, and for nearly a year I saw little of the Tantifers, although I heard a great deal about them. My ears were, indeed, opened by expectation. It seemed to me that a wife on one side of a steel door, and a husband on the other, ought to develop some details of interest. The first news of trouble did not, therefore, come to me as a surprise. Wives have not been tolerant of secret closets—whether called studies, laboratories, or by the other deceptive titles adopted by wicked men—since the days of Bluebeard. Nevertheless, Bluebeards—in the secretive, if not the matrimonial sense—continue to exist, and I set down Howard Tantifer as one of them. The first rumours of matrimonial disturbances did not surprise me, but when they gathered precision and took a concrete shape I was not a little astonished. The suburbs have grave defects; the residents ape the fashionable world in many irritating ways, but they do not often emulate its extravagance. I should not have believed, had the evidence been less overwhelming, that a girl like Maud Winstanley, brought up to regard one thousand pounds a year as wealth, would, in a few months of married life, have developed a purposeless rage for dress, diamonds, costly prints, and old china.

My authority was Mrs. Winstanley, the girl's mother. Not the least hateful of this woman's qualities was her exceptional truthfulness. It is better to tell many lies than once to blurt out the kind of truth which ought to be buried. Mrs. Winstanley told us in her own drawing-room that Maud was ruining her husband, and the mother's air of half-frightened admiration disgusted me more than did the daughter's inexplicable folly. I had no reason to suppose that Tantifer was in any sense rich. His house and his manner of life were those of a man with five or six hundred a year, an income which provides little margin for feminine extravagance.

In the early summer, nearly a year after the wedding, I met Mrs. Tantifer in the street. A few months before she had been a young and fairly pretty girl—Lady Browne is not accurate in her descriptions of young women—now she was old, and ill, and ugly. The change was pitiful. My disturbed feelings must have affected my face.



'I'm not very well, Mr. Gatepath,' she said.

'Maud,' I whispered hurriedly, for the pavement was crowded, 'what's the matter? You are looking awfully ill.'

'I am ill,' she said.

The precise accounts of her extravagance, to which I have alluded, recurred to my mind, and the rough explanation of folly which had hitherto satisfied me appeared now to be imperfect. Feminine folly does not disagree with its votaries so powerfully as to kill them in twelve months. Mrs. Tantifer's trouble was evidently due to something much more subtle, and I was inclined now to set down both waste of money and of health to the same disturbing cause.

'Mrs. Tantifer,' I said, 'you're a married woman, and I am perhaps a meddling old fool. Snub me if I am impertinent, but please answer my question. Can I help you in any way?'

She looked at me strangely out of her dreadful hollow eyes. 'I don't know,' she murmured, 'I must think. Don't ask me now. Perhaps——' and she turned into a shop and was gone.

The next morning by the first post I received the following letter:—

'DEAR MR. GATEPATH,—I think that there must be a God after all. I have no father and no brothers, and the need for the disinterested services of a man were pressing me to death when you met me to-day. Old friend, you *can* help me. Please be at Mrs. McGrath's tennis party to-morrow afternoon.

'Yours expectantly, MAUD TANTIFER.'

Mrs. Tantifer plainly regarded me as a friend who was too old to be dangerous, a view which was not entirely agreeable to my feelings. My offer, made under an emotional impulse, had been seriously accepted, and there was no course left me but to play gracefully the part of a middle-aged knight errant.

Poor Mrs. McGrath was convinced by my assured air of welcome that she had inadvertently sent me a card. '*So good of you,*' I murmured over her hand, 'not to forget us old fellows.'

Maud Tantifer took an early opportunity to lead me into a remote corner of the McGraths' splendid garden. She was looking less ghastly than on the previous day, and I plainly read hope in her eyes.

'Dear Mr. Gatepath,' she said, 'how can I thank you enough?'

'Don't thank me at all. I have done nothing as yet.'

'You are a friend of my husband, Mr. Tantifer?' she asked.

'Say, rather, an acquaintance.'

'I met you leaving his house one afternoon before my marriage. He does not admit many people to his house.'

'He could hardly be said to have admitted me.'

'How much did you see?' she inquired eagerly.

'I saw a laboratory protected from observation by having its windows near the roof, and from entrance by a fire-proof door.'

'Did you—did you suspect anything wrong?'

'No,' I replied, truthfully. 'I did not. It is not at all uncommon for scientific men to put an entirely exaggerated value upon their labours. They look upon all men as potential supplanters of the owners in their trumpery discoveries. Your husband has protected himself more perfectly than inventors usually do, but he is probably not the first man who has worked behind a strong-room door. From one or two inquiries that I instituted I found that he made no particular secret of the fact of his secrecy; he has been known to laugh over it as if the laboratory were an idle man's fad.'

'My husband is an extraordinarily clever man,' said the wife, as one propounding a recent discovery. 'He is my husband,' she went on, 'and I would endure the life if it were possible. But his wickedness is killing me, his wickedness and the fear, the fear——' She stopped. 'Without help there is no retreat, for I have no fortune, and my mother——'

'I know Mrs. Winstanley,' I observed dryly.

'I want a man's help, Mr. Gatepath. I had thought of everything and of everybody. Nothing was of use, and I despaired until—until I saw your kind face in the street yesterday. Dear old friend, you will help me, won't you?'

'I will do anything you wish. Don't cry, my dear, it's all right now. Don't cry, or, confound it, you will make me cry too.' I comforted her as best I could until she grew calm.

'I can't tell you the frightful truth—he is my husband—but you will find it out. Yes, you will easily find it out. It is not very difficult to climb up and look in at the window when he is working. Then you will see and understand, and can tell me what to do.'

So with this understanding we parted.

When I came to think over my plan of campaign, I was annoyed to observe the element of low comedy which Mrs.

Tantifer's scruples had imported into the matrimonial tragedy. As I could not look in upon Tantifer's evil doings—whatever they might be—without the assistance of a ladder, it was plainly necessary that I should not only procure the burglarious instrument, but myself carry it to the scene of action. It was evident that the police might regard with grave suspicion the spectacle of a middle-aged gentleman bearing a ladder towards some one else's house in the dead of night. I considered and rejected many plans, and might still have been turning over the problem, had not the urgency of the case compelled me to adopt the simplest solution.

I therefore set out at one o'clock on a dark morning with a light ladder upon my shoulder. I have no arrest to record; but in mental agony I suffered fifty arrests. Every footstep, every shadow on the road, heralded for me the approach of a policeman. If burglars, in the active exercise of their profession, experience a tenth part of my misery upon this innocent journey, their occupation is the least desirable and worst paid one in the world.

Observations which I had recently made into Tantifer's habits guided my selection of the hour, and, as I expected, the lighted windows of the laboratory shone into the night. The weather was warm, and more than one of the sashes stood open. Made careless by long security, Tantifer had neglected to lower the blinds. I set my ladder against the wall below one of the sills, and lightly ascended. The night was warm, but the air within the laboratory was yet warmer, so that a thin mist had gathered on the window panes. It was, therefore, necessary for me to climb to the upper rungs of my ladder and to look over the top of the lowered sash.

I at once saw Tantifer, who was moving about dressed in flannels, but I could not at first grasp the nature of his occupation. In the middle of the room stood a large iron instrument from which stretched out a long lever or arm, the whole resembling the weighing machines one sees at railway stations. In front of this machine was a bench dotted with round white discs. A heap of similar objects appeared on a little table, and beside the heap was placed a small gas stove covered with a red-hot plate. So much I observed without comprehension. Tantifer approached his apparatus and tossed a disc from the heap on to the hot plate of his stove. Then he treated the object as if it were a chop on a grill, turning and re-turning it. After, for me, a painful delay,

he picked up the disc with a pair of pincers, inserted it in some part of the iron machine, and threw his weight on the lever. I heard a dull thud and a sharp hiss as a piece of hot metal fell into a pan of water.

Then my sleeping intelligence awoke, and I understood !

I had involuntarily shaken the window, for Tantifer's eyes were instantly turned on my face. We gazed at one another for an immeasurable time, and then he dashed open a drawer. There was a spurt of flame, a bang, and a bullet smacked against the window sash beside my chin. I jumped backwards, and my ladder and I fell into the garden.

### III.

#### TANTIFER'S MONEY.

WHEN I recovered my bruised senses I was lying on my back in the laboratory, and Tantifer was pouring brandy down my throat. 'Lie still,' he said, 'you have banged your head against one of my flower-pots.'

His voice was curiously gentle for that of a detected criminal. In a few minutes he spoke again.

'I am sorry that I fired a revolver at your head ; but the sudden apparition of your white face over my window upset my nerves. When I discovered the identity of my visitor, it instantly occurred to me that you had saved me the burden of a difficult decision. For that service, Mr. Gatepath, I am truly grateful.'

He paused, carefully regarding me, and I heard him laugh quietly to himself.

'Why you came, and what you expected to find, Mr. Gatepath,' said Tantifer, 'I do not know, and I have not enough interest to inquire. It is sufficient that you are here and that your appearance is very funny.'

There was little merriment in his laugh. Under the strong light of the laboratory I noted that the change in him was hardly less than in his wife. His face was extraordinarily white and seamed, and the grey streaks in his hair were far more numerous than in my own, which had twenty strong reasons in the shape of added years for being the whiter.

'This is a most eventful night, Mr. Gatepath,' said Tantifer, tramping the room uneasily ; 'you have discovered a secret which is vital to me, and my future course is instantly made plain.'

'Does Mrs. Tantifer know what you are?'

'Does she know?' he shouted. 'Can a woman and a secret live together? I explained my need of privacy to Mrs. Tantifer, the delicacy and danger of my experiments, I hinted darkly at frightful explosives, and suggested my dread lest envious competitors should steal my scientific discoveries. The deceptiveness of women is horrible, Mr. Gatepath. I lavished lies upon Mrs. Tantifer, beautiful lies which fitted one another like pieces of mosaic: she seemed to accept them all. She used to discuss my chemical difficulties before me with an assumption of interest which staggers and horrifies me in the recollection. Yet all the while she was plotting the passage of my iron door. What was my secret when weighed against her curiosity? Nothing, Gatepath. And God created woman as a helpmeet to man. Heavens, what a Divine disappointment! How could you, a man of experience, ask if Mrs. Tantifer knew?'

It was necessary for Mrs. Tantifer's sake to ask the question, but it was by no means necessary for me to explain why I asked.

'How I loved that woman!' he went on. 'All I had was hers except my secret. I concealed my work for her sake, yet she dashed the fact of concealment in my face. She taunted me with crime. She declared that as I practically stole my money she should not respect it, and, by God, she has kept her word. Two thousand pounds have been flung away by Mrs. Tantifer in six months, and I have paid all the household bills myself. Whatever she asks I give, and never receive thanks, not even a smile.'

I watched his lips quiver, and pitied the man from my heart.

'Don't you think, Tantifer,' I said as kindly as I could, 'that your wife's position was rather difficult? Considering how what we will call her conventional notions of honesty would revolt against your occupation, she was left with two courses only. Either she would refuse to touch your money, or she would treat it as dirt. She chose the latter. It does not in the least follow that because your wife hates your work this dislike is extended to yourself.'

We were silent for a while, and then Tantifer said:

'I should like to tell you the whole story, if you would care to listen, Mr. Gatepath. You will see the end, and it will add to your interest to know the beginning.'

I assured him of my close attention, and he began:

'I am the son of a manufacturing silversmith, and have been

apprenticed to all the branches of the business. You may have seen the bangles and other trifles which I sometimes make, and if so you will admit my skill as a workman. Ten years ago my father died. He left a fair business, in which I inherited a share, but as the other partner was a most offensive uncle I sold my interest to him for cash. Then I set up as a gentleman for a year, wasting a lot of money and getting little in return. After that, seeing the urgent necessity, I cast about for the means of earning a decent income. It was then that the profitable use to which the low price of silver could be put suggested itself to my mind. You will please understand at once, Mr. Gatepath, that I am no vulgar "smasher." I "utter false coin," as the lawyers say, but at the same time I give people precisely the same value for their florins and half-crowns as the Mint does. I coin, Mr. Gatepath, in *standard silver*.'

Those words explained all that had hitherto puzzled me. I now understood Tantifer's long years of unchallenged safety. His coins had to endure the single test of workmanship, and the man was an artist! I had seen his work. Instinctively my hand moved towards my pocket.

Tantifer smiled. 'It is quite likely. My money passes and circulates everywhere. When I began to produce silver coins experimentally, nine years ago, pure silver was 3*s.* 6*d.* an ounce, or 42 shillings a pound Troy. Standard silver is not pure. The pure metal is too soft, so we have to harden it by adding copper. Standard silver contains thirty-seven fortieths of the pure metal, and cost, when I began, about 39 shillings a pound. The market value has fallen steadily ever since, until I can now buy my raw material at 25 shillings a pound Troy. You may not be aware that a pound of standard silver will manufacture into 66 shillings, or into a corresponding number of other coins. That is to say, the metal which now costs me 25 shillings to purchase is worth 66 shillings the instant it is coined. You will see that the basis of my fortune has been the fact that silver coins are mere tokens, of which the nominal value is fixed and is independent of the intrinsic value. The difference between these values leaves a handsome margin of profit, so handsome that for every three guineas' worth of coins which I now produce nearly two guineas is clear gain. No one but an ignorant amateur would use a base metal when he could buy genuine silver so cheaply. In the early days of my work the profit was less than during recent years, but

it was still sufficient to repay me lavishly for my labour. I began by making moulds of plaster of Paris from newly minted coins, and I cast my imitations from these moulds. The process was long and troublesome. The coins needed a great deal of highly skilled attention before being perfect, and I never felt quite safe with them. At that time I could detect minute differences between my own coins and the genuine products of the Mint. I can do so no longer. The change is due to better apparatus. My press over there is a beautiful instrument. The finer parts I made myself, and the heavy castings were done from my own patterns. The dies grip the smooth silver with the force of two tons; all that I do is to sit on the lever. I cast my steel dies from bright fresh coins, and finish them by hand. I melt down the ingots of bullion, recast the metal into thin sheets, stamp out the rough discs, mill and raise the edges. I do everything which is done in the Mint, and I do it all by myself.

Criminal as the man legally was, I admired his knowledge and courage and wonderful skill. Everyone whose pocket contained money was his natural enemy. He had tapped the life-blood of a civilised state so cleverly, that the stupid monster had never felt the knife, nor had been conscious of the long drain upon its heart. He was as one who had conquered lions, only to be fatally stung by a scorpion. He who had for nine years defied a government was himself flung to the ground by a woman, by a woman, too, who had unconsciously blundered into victory. However fast he made money, his wife could spend it faster, and against her his skill and his courage were alike vain. I could not wonder at the grey hair and the lines on his face; it was the bitterest, stupidest, most pitiful defeat that ever a strong man suffered.

'I bought the lease of this house,' went on Tantifer, 'with the relics of my own inheritance, and I built this room so that I might coin in secret. My knowledge of chemistry is sufficient to let me pass as an amateur enthusiast, and I occasionally turn out silver trinkets to withdraw attention from my considerable purchases of metal. I do not try to conceal the fact of my secrecy, as a parade of candour is my best means of self-preservation. My iron door is a necessary protection against servants and inquisitive callers—such as you were once yourself, Mr. Gatepath—and I readily admit its existence to my friends. It is one of "Tantifer's fads" and has been talked about for years. Nobody takes my concealment nor my science seriously.'



'I do not quite understand,' I put in, 'how you dispose of your manufactures. Surely that was a great difficulty. Silver is not a legal tender, and——'

'Of course not,' interrupted Tantifer rather irritably. 'I cannot pay with silver a greater amount than forty shillings, but what does that matter? You are on the edge of a subject, Gatepath, of which I know the length and the breadth and the height. The disposal of my coins was never a difficulty, because I adapted myself to existing conditions. In the first place, I am not a bungling amateur who makes half-a-crown and then runs off with the hot coin to a public-house to buy beer. You haven't got that elementary idea out of your head yet. I never get rid of my coins within twelve months at least of manufacture. They have time to tone down in colour, to take on a disguise of use, and by knocking one another about to wear away sharp edges. My attention, for convenience of manufacture and to save time, is confined exclusively to florins and half-crowns. I make them with the dates of each year while it is current, and do not attempt to pass them until the year following. As I do not dispose of my whole stock of any one date, I never lack a pleasing variety. For several years past I have coined the silver equivalents of 30*l.* every week. That is about my limit; there is much to do, and everything must be done by myself. Twice or three times a week I put 10*l.* worth of miscellaneous florins and half-crowns into my pockets and take the train for some part of London. Any part will do; there is a fine field of choice, and little need for repetition. The rest is child's play. I enter a shop, make a small purchase, and beg to be obliged with gold for ten shillings' worth of silver. Tradesmen are glad to get change and make no difficulty. By this means I can easily alter my load from silver to gold in an hour. As for danger there is none. I would not hesitate to pass one of my half-crowns on the Deputy Master of the Mint. You smile, confound you! Take these and be convinced of the perfection of my work.'

Tantifer moved quickly from one large chest to another, and then brought me nine half-crowns dated consecutively from 1889 to 1897. I took them, and I have them still. I have weighed those half-crowns, pored over them with a magnifier, compared them with what purported (I am sure of nothing now) to be genuine coinage of like dates; I have even shaved off little pieces for analysis by an assayer, and I am convinced. My heirs will

find those half-crowns and spend them without a suspicion of their origin. In the meantime I cherish and delight in them; I rejoice wickedly in the perfection of their falseness. I own them with as pleased a conscience as I should a universally accredited Raphael which I secretly knew to be a copy.

'There is little more to be said,' observed this Prince of Coiners. 'The game has been well played. For reasons which are plain, I had nearly decided to throw up my hand before your obtrusive head popped over my window sash—that was a pretty shot, Gatepath, a short four inches to the left and you wouldn't have been listening to this story. Now all is over. You have discovered me? I really do not see the use of further concealment. No, I'm not going to surrender to the police. I'm not a fool. I am going to return to the paths of virtue and become once more a poor bachelor.'

'Tantifer,' I said, 'the moral question is no affair of mine, and I will spare you an impertinent sermon. But this I will say. You made a great mistake when you married before having amassed a sufficient fortune to give up this unlawful business, and you made a still greater mistake in withholding your confidence from Miss Maud Winstanley. A woman will forgive any crime, except deception, in the man she loves.'

'Exactly,' he muttered sadly; 'in the man she loves.'

Then the respectable Roger Gatepath arose and stretched out a hand to the criminal. I am glad that I did it. It may be that at the moment I accounted it a kindly act of condescension, but afterwards—perhaps the reader will presently understand what were my feelings afterwards.

'Thank you. You will come again, Mr. Gatepath, once more—the day after to-morrow—at noon.'

As I walked away it came into my mind with a rush of admiring wonder that he had never asked for my secrecy. He knew that I could by a word deliver him up to years of imprisonment, yet he had me in his power and exacted no promise. The possibility of being betrayed by me had never occurred to him. And this was the man whom Lady Browne, Lady Browne forsooth, had pretended was not a gentleman! I had come out that night a partisan of the wife; on my return I was not far from transferring my allegiance to the husband.

When at the appointed time I entered Tantifer's dining-room, the air felt charged with strange emotions. I was worried

and nervous. My bachelor life has moved in pleasant places; I am unused to contact with crime and to feel the waves of strong passions about me. Maud Tantifer and her mother were already in the room. Maud favoured me with a grave bow, but Mrs. Winstanley ignored me altogether. She was blinded by her own unspeakable woe. Maud looked like a statue in dull marble. While I was observing my companions, the door opened and Tantifer strode in.

No one spoke for a few minutes, and then, to my angry astonishment, Mrs. Winstanley broke into a roar of words and tears. 'I can't help it, Maud, I really can't. I thought you would be so happy. Mr. Tantifer had such a nice house and so much money, and now you say he has nothing and ought to go to prison. You say he isn't going to make any more money for you to throw away, and I'm sure I don't blame him for that. But, perhaps, if you promise to be more careful—I'm sure I brought you up *most* economically—he'll forgive you and go on with his business. I always said Mr. Tantifer was too kind and generous; didn't I, Mr. Gatepath? It is difficult enough to get along by myself, but if I have you to keep too——'

'Maud,' came Tantifer's great voice, swallowing up the miserable creature's babble, 'does your mother know how I make my money?'

His wife bent her head.

'I have called you three together to state my intentions as regards the future. Let us dismiss the past. You all know what my manner of life has been, and you all know why my occupation has now been permanently abandoned. You understand, Mrs. Winstanley, permanently abandoned. My wife will, in future, regulate her expenses at her pleasure; she will be responsible to herself alone and be herself the sole sufferer by any excess. She will live where, and in the manner that, she pleases. I make no complaint. I have myself acted wrongly through my ignorance of women; I have assumed love where love did not exist, I have mistaken acquiescence for affection, and I have foolishly fretted at a coldness which was the natural consequence of outraged respectability. The fault was mine alone. I married your daughter, Mrs. Winstanley, because I loved her, and I leave her now because—because I love her still.'

My chair was placed beside that of Mrs. Tantifer, and I heard her breathing quicken. Tantifer leaned against the mantelpiece,

with a faint smile on his worn face. He spoke slowly, and every word dripped like blood.

'Had I come to this decision six months ago it would have been better for Mrs. Tantifer in a pecuniary sense, but as during these months she has been spending her own money, and has had an unquestionable right to spend it, it is not for me to comment on the rapidity or on the methods of her expenditure. All I have is hers, and has been hers since she entered this house as my wife.'

'Was there then a settlement?' gasped Mrs. Winstanley.

'Settlement? No.' Tantifer flashed out in fierce disgust. 'What need for a settlement between my wife and me? Did I not say that I loved her, loved her? All I have is hers. There is not much, Maud,' he went on gently. 'The lease of this house has seventy years to run. The house is yours to keep or to sell. There is besides about 2,000*l.* well invested, all that remains of my inheritance and the savings of nine years. The stock shall be transferred to your name, and a conveyance of the house executed. We must come to lawyers' deeds now that we separate. There is, at the worst, enough to live upon quietly for an indefinite time, or to spend handsomely in a year.'

'That really is most kind of you, Mr. Tantifer,' began Mrs. Winstanley, 'although I expect you have given us the money and the house to keep us from putting you in prison. Still it is kind, that I shall always say. The house will let easily for 80*l.* and the money ought to bring in eighty more. You must, of course, live with your mother, Maud—to whom can a deserted daughter fly unless to a mother?—and with your little income and my own annuity we shall get on capitally. What do you say to Bournemouth in the autumn? I was thinking of going, and now if you will share the lodgings with me—'

'Be silent!' I shouted. I was maddened by the petty meanness of the woman.

'Really, Mr. Gatepath——' Mrs. Winstanley was beginning, but I paid no attention, for Maud suddenly broke her stony silence.

'What,' she asked hoarsely, 'what are *you* going to do?'

'I? Oh, my plans are quite simple. I have a few hundred pounds represented by bullion and silver coin, of which no one will contest with me the ownership. With these—and you will please accept my word as to their sufficiency—I shall return to my old

business. I shall become once more a manufacturing silversmith. There are many things which I cannot do; I do not make a good gentleman nor a good husband, but I can work in silver. Believe me, I shall do very well, and in a year or two shall be able to add to your small income.'

'If you are a woman,' I cried silently in my angry thoughts, 'go and comfort him. Don't you see that he is stripping himself for you, and one of the finest hearts on God's earth is bleeding for you? You are not worth it, but that does not trouble him. Go and comfort him, I say.' But I said no word, and she sat still.

'I have only to say,' resumed Tantifer, 'that the necessary business shall be put through as quickly as possible. I shall leave this house immediately, and you, Maud, will stay in it or not at your convenience. I will endeavour to avoid you when I come some evening to get what I require. For the future I can promise you entire freedom from my presence.'

He hesitated, and some of his social awkwardness seized upon him. He wanted to go, but found a difficulty in leaving the room.

A hand gripped my arm—heavens, what iron fingers Mrs. Tantifer had!—and a voice murmured into my ear, 'Is he really going away—for always?'

'Yes, he is,' I retorted brutally. 'He is going away and you will never see him again. He has given you all his money, so there is no reason why he should stop any longer.'

She had turned from me and was looking at Tantifer. I saw her rise up, and I saw her hard face break into such a storm of love and pity as these eyes had never witnessed before, nor have since. She rose up, took two steps forward, and dropped on her knees at Tantifer's feet.

I sprang up too and jumped about in my excitement. Mrs. Winstanley tried also to leave her chair, but I put my hands upon her shoulders and compelled her to be seated.

Tantifer stooped over his wife. His looks softened a little—not much. The mask slipped for an instant, but was quickly replaced. He clasped the woman's hands, lifted her from the ground, and courteously led her to a sofa. Then he kissed her, bowed to us, and turned to go.

'Tantifer,' I cried; 'Tantifer, she loves you!'

But he shook his head and went away, and I saw him no more.

BENNET COPPLESTONE.

## A VOICE FROM THE COUNTRY.

I AM not ashamed of being called a 'Country Cousin.' You townspeople regard us with an air of infinite superiority, and hint that were it not for an occasional visit to your grimy and crowded streets we should lapse into utter barbarism; but I should like to know where *you* would be without *us*? What would you do if we did not supply you with butter, eggs, poultry, and other provisions—if, in a word, we boycotted you? Why, you would simply be famine-stricken, and after living for a time on your dogs and cats, and the few sheep that browse in the parks, you would have to surrender to us on our own terms. On the other hand, *we* could do very well without *you*. As regards the necessities of life this is obvious; and if you deprived us of books, newspapers, ornaments, and other luxuries, we could soon establish printing-presses and workshops of our own. So there now!

Having thus sufficiently demonstrated 'to any mind of average intelligence'—that is a most convenient phrase in argument—that we country people are far more necessary to the general welfare than you cockneys, I don't mind admitting that there are a few little apparent drawbacks to country life. Our postal arrangements, for instance, are not first-class. In our part of the world there is only one postal delivery in the day, and the nearest postal and telegraph office is a mile distant. Then, although we *do* get our newspaper on the day of publication (a great triumph!) it arrives in an erratic fashion; sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the evening, sometimes—when we are particularly anxious for news—not at all. The station also is two or three miles off, and the service of trains is not grand, so that if by any chance you miss a train you *may* have to wait four hours for another. These are, as I said, apparent drawbacks; but if you look closely into them you will see that they are in reality advantages. In the first place I can say, without hesitation, that to have only one post in the day is a decided blessing. Your correspondence comes in in one batch; you read it through, and for the remainder of the day have no more bother with it. You rest in calm security, quite certain that till the next morning, at least, you will have no more bills, circulars, or begging-letters.

Just think of that, you town folk who live in constant dread of what the postman may bring you! Why, I would not give a halfpenny stamp for your peace of mind. That ever recurring rat-tat must take ten years off your lives. No wonder that your hair turns prematurely grey, and that you are subject to nervous disorders. Telegrams, too, what a nuisance they are—even worse than the letters! In town one's friends are always sending them, frequently on quite trivial matters; and apart from the mental shocks they occasion, they are often wrongly worded, and thus lead to most serious misunderstandings. In my opinion more than half the quarrels amongst well-educated people are due to mistakes in telegrams. Now, in the country, people seldom send them except on important occasions; (or if they do you have an infallible remedy, viz. give directions at the post office to forward no messages on which the extra fee for portorage has not been prepaid. You are troubled with no more telegrams;) their purses are furnished far too scantily with sixpences to admit of their squandering them in telegraphing frivolous inquiries after colds and sore throats, and unnecessary birthday congratulations.

As to the newspaper, it is obvious that you appreciate it much more when you have to wait for it, and when it comes at unexpected moments. I never properly enjoyed a newspaper till I settled in the country. The reason is that in town you have too *many* journals, and get perfectly nauseated with them. You cannot walk down a street without some bawling urchin thrusting the 'latest edition' under your nose. Here, on the other hand, we have only one, or at most two papers each day, and we read and digest them thoroughly, with a satisfaction to which you, with your scrambling, scrappy method of perusal, are entire strangers.

As regards the train question, I am bound to confess that when after rushing off to your country station some morning you arrive, hot and tired, just in time to see the train go off, and have to wait till the afternoon for another, it is 'just a little—just a little disappointing.' However, it is a capital exercise for the temper, and the man who on such an occasion is able to refrain from strong language, mental or otherwise, is entitled to feel quite a glow of virtuous pleasure. And when the first little annoyance is got over, what can be more delightful to the philosophic mind than a long wait at a country station? You can, in the first place, study the advertisements to your heart's content;



you can really get them up thoroughly, and ascertain the precise reasons why Jones's soap is the best, and why Brown's blacking defies competition. Then there are the station-master and porters to talk to—cheery, good-humoured fellows, who are not at all disconcerted by your having missed your train, but will converse with you on the weather or kindred topics as affably as if nothing had happened. Then if you feel hungry, you have wherewith to satisfy your cravings. There is indeed no refreshment-room within several miles, but you have at hand an automatic confectionery provider, where, *if* the machine be in working order, you can sip the sweets of Cadbury or Fry. No—all things considered, you cannot persuade me that the town has the better of the country in the matter of railway communication, or that the Londoner knows anything of the delight that *we* feel when, on an occasion such as I have described, the long-desired train at last draws in sight.

So much then for some of our supposed 'drawbacks;' and I will engage to dispose equally well of any others that may be alleged: if I could not, where would be the use of argument? But now, with the editor's leave, I am going to make some remarks on country life in general, and my own experiences of it in particular.

My first observation is that you meet a great many more queer and interesting people in the country than in the town. Tennyson agrees with me here, for he says—

Ground in yonder social mill  
We rub each other's angles down,  
And merge . . . in form and gloss  
The picturesque of man and man.

The lady who formerly owned our house was one of the most 'picturesque' specimens of humanity I ever came across. Her idiosyncrasies—provided you did not suffer from them personally—were as interesting as a psychological novel. For over-reaching and double-dealing I never saw her equal; her ways were as crooked as a Devonshire lane; and these qualities were rendered especially piquant by an occasional bluntness—not to say savagery of manner—that would have done credit to the most upright and honest of mankind. It was really marvellous! While mentally calculating the extent of your gullibility, and devising the most ingenious schemes against your purse, she would contrive, by an air of injured innocence or righteous superiority, to make you

sink into your shoes with remorse and shame. There was no *cringing* about her—far from it! She quarrelled with everyone, including her house agent and solicitor. She was not popular—the truly great seldom are. In the village she seems to have been regarded as a sort of ogress, and for weeks after our arrival we were regaled with anecdotes of an unflattering nature regarding her dealings. Far be it from me to repeat these petty slanders; let me rather describe one or two of the more pleasing and humorous traits of her character, as follows.

In common with most of the landed aristocracy, she had a taste for game, which she was accustomed to gratify in the following novel and economical manner. Perceiving that her grounds were frequented by pheasants—fairly tame birds in these days—she scattered liberal handfuls of rice and raisins, and having by this means won the confidence and affection of the feathered throng, she bided her time, and when a fine healthy bird came within easy distance, she darted nimbly forward and wrung its neck. Was not this a delightful though somewhat unsportsman-like method of providing one's supper?

She had a playful disposition, which showed itself even in matters of business. Thus it was her habit to order articles to be specially made for her and then refuse to take them; sometimes she would summon builders and other artificers from neighbouring towns, and after engaging them in interviews of several hours, in which she went into details of elaborate alterations for her house, and gave instructions for drawing up neat plans, &c., she would inform them that she had changed her mind, and had no further need for their services. Little jokes like this were highly appreciated by the parties interested. To her sense of humour was also joined an occasional spirit of benevolence. Once she apprised the rector of the parish that she would like to give a school treat. The offer was accepted with alacrity, and this is how she set about it. She went round to various neighbours; from one she got a promise of jam, from another of tea, from another of cake, and so on. Finally, after securing nearly everything that was needful, she herself provided the bread and butter; and thus was instituted what was long known afterwards as 'Mrs. Grummles' School Treat.' This was not the only occasion on which she displayed her economical turn of mind. She once drove down to the station with a sack of potatoes, and had a serious difference with the stationmaster,

because he objected to her conveying it by rail as 'personal luggage.' In bargaining, too, she delighted to drive down estimates to their lowest possible figure; in consequence of which—so small is the appreciation of thrift in the vulgar mind—she was latterly unable to get anyone to work for her.

Our own relations with Mrs. Grummles, though pleasant at first, ended, I regret to say, by being somewhat 'strained.' We forgave her for getting by far the best of us in the house negotiations, and for wheedling us into taking a number of 'fittings' that we did not require; but when, after entering into possession, we found that she had cunningly concealed, by means of plaster and paper, all sorts of defects in our new domicile; when 'dry-rot fungus' was discovered vegetating with great luxuriance under the drawing-room floor; when the rain fell in little impromptu shower-baths through the patched-up roof, and oozed through chinks in the window-sashes; when the nice clean wall-paper (recently pasted on) began to peel off and disclose rotten wood-work and crumbling masonry—*then* our feelings underwent a change, and we did not bless Mrs. Grummles. We thought she had gone just a little too far.

Such are a few outlines of Mrs. Grummles' character, but it would take volumes to do it full justice; and where, I would ask, in your crowded towns, could you find a nature so interesting and original? Over-reaching, grasping people of the vulgar type you have no doubt in plenty, but you could never produce a Mrs. Grummles; the thing is impossible.

Though we can boast of human oddities, it must on the other hand be admitted that we have but little 'society.' Social gatherings are of rare occurrence; an afternoon tea is an event, a dance is a festival to be treasured in the memory for years. Amusements, too, are rather scarce. In summer we have a few cricket matches, a flower show, and a school treat; in winter we indulge in a couple of concerts and a penny-reading. Then, once in six months, an adventurous organ grinder wanders down our way, and delights us with the popular airs of last year. That about fills up the list of our 'amusements:' what more can you expect when owing to *laissez faire* and free trade the country is getting more depopulated every day? Do not suppose, however, that we are utterly swamped in dullness and *ennui*: no, we have pursuits and enjoyments of which you know nothing, and which, though involving a certain amount of trouble and anxiety, are

more enthralling and satisfying than any variety or music-hall entertainment. I will mention only one—*horticulture*; as long as we have this, we can compete with you in the matter of amusements, though your big towns should drain out nearly all our young blood, and reduce our 'society' to that of sheep and cows. The person, whether male or female, who does not take an interest in gardening has no business in the country. There are, I believe, such people—ignoramuses who cannot tell a Brussels sprout from a cabbage, and who only come down to the country, at the worst season of the year, for the 'hunting;' but they are not worth talking about; mere cockneys at heart, they have never been initiated into the mysteries of nature. The true countryman goes in for gardening heart and soul; and what occupation could be more interesting, more abounding in variety and capability? It certainly involves some hard and unpleasant work: pruning gooseberry bushes with numbed fingers in a biting March wind is not delightful; nor do you enjoy leaving your comfortable hearth on a winter's night to hunt for slugs with a lantern, or 'bank up' the greenhouse fire. Pulling up weeds in wet weather is also not unmixed bliss, and there are few who enjoy nailing up a very thorny rose tree to a very dilapidated wall on a blazing hot day. But I would ask if these or any other of the trials of gardening are worse than things you townspeople have to put up with—such, for instance, as waiting at a street corner for half an hour in a driving rain for an omnibus; or travelling on an oppressive day in August in a crowded Underground Railway carriage; or living for weeks together in an atmosphere of sooty fog? We gardeners too have this advantage, that from all our trouble we expect and generally obtain a satisfactory result, whereas *your* sufferings bring you nothing but future colds and sore throats.

When we first came here our garden was in a shocking state of confusion. The worthy Mrs. Grummles was apparently under the impression either that we preferred nature in unadorned wildness, or that we should rather enjoy the business of putting things to rights. She had therefore latterly employed no regular gardener—with surprising results! If ever there was a garden worthy of being compared to the sluggard's it was ours. The flowerbeds were not merely weedy, they were *carpeted* with weeds, and you couldn't tell them from the lawn. We hired two able-bodied men, and the whole household set to work against those

weeds. We slashed into them with might and main, and, as we thought, succeeded in exterminating them. Then we took some well-earned repose, and in a fortnight a fresh crop came up, as thick as ever! Nothing daunted, we renewed the assault, and since then we fight doggedly on, though sometimes we think we are engaged in a forlorn hope. I have made quite a study of weeds since I came here, and find in them a great variety in character. The nettle, for instance, is obtrusive; it loves to remind you of its presence at unexpected moments; it *will* be noticed, although you have not the least desire to make its acquaintance. Docks and thistles are remarkable for their bold, brazen insolence; they are positively vulgar in their self-assertion. The couch-grass is an embodiment of tough unyielding perseverance. Like the British army, it never knows when it is beaten. You may root it up, cut it and slash it as much as you like, but it 'conquers in its martyrdom,' and every disjointed particle becomes a fresh plant. The bind-weed again is undeniably pretty—or would be in its proper place by the wayside. It is an example of misapplied energy—a grave lesson to the reflective mind. I might mention other instances, but as I am going to bring out a book on 'The Philosophy of Weeds,' I need not enlarge on the subject here. The weeds, however, did not prevent the charms of our garden from unfolding themselves. We had hundreds of splendid roses, and the orchard trees were laden with fine fruit that grew mellow and more beautiful every week. How delightful it was to step out from our porch on a glorious summer's morning when the sky was cloudless blue, and the air redolent with the scent of flowers! Our morning business was to make a tour of the whole place, beginning with the flower-garden and finishing with the orchard and meadow. Then, in the afternoon, we would sally forth, armed with spade and hoe, to do all manner of garden work, resting awhile about five o'clock to take tea on the lawn, where we were shaded by fragrant pine-trees, and serenaded by troops of birds. Then, after working again to supper-time, we would watch the stars come out one by one in unclouded brightness, and at 10 P.M. turn into bed, proudly conscious of having 'earned a night's repose.' This is the sort of life we led—not for single days, but for weeks together. Can you imagine it, my cockney friends? Can you by any expenditure of money buy anything like it in the London shops? But I will not taunt you with our superior felicity; only let me advise you, 'If these delights your

soul can move,' pack up your things at once and migrate to a country village.

You must not suppose, however, that life with us is a mere pastime; no, it is a strict combination of business with pleasure. Confiding in my reader's secrecy, I will reveal the fact that before I settled in the country I was engaged in the profession of literature. What profit resulted therefrom to publisher and printer I am unable to say, but as regards myself I can state with confidence that it might be contained in a very small nutshell. This being the case, I decided on coming here to take up market gardening in addition to literature. Such a combination is quite the fashion nowadays, as evidenced in the case of Mr. Blackmore and others of our leading novelists; it also seems a most prudent course, for if one fails the other ought to succeed, and theoretically you are perfectly safe. But alas for the fallibility of theories! My grand idea was to go in for *fruit farming*. Mr. Gladstone advised it as a lucrative occupation, and aesthetically considered, what could be more charming and poetical? Accordingly I procured several books on 'Fruit-growing for Profit'—they always have that kind of title—and studied them with the utmost care. In one way my efforts were fully rewarded. I grew excellent fruit, there was no doubt of *that*; there were hundreds of bushels of it, and the trees were positively groaning under its weight. Now, however, came the difficulty; *there was no one to buy it*—at least at a fair price. Dealers came to look at it, offered for it the price of turnips or potatoes, but would make no higher bid. As for windfalls, they positively strewed the ground; you could not walk in the orchard without treading on them. Nobody would buy them—the market was 'glutted'—it always is according to the dealer. Finally, I counted up our profits at the end of the season, and found they came to what Carlyle calls 'a frightful minus quantity.'

It will thus be seen that it is possible to come to the ground between the two stools of literature and fruit farming. On the whole, however, there is a distinct advantage on the side of the latter profession. If you cannot sell your fruit, you can at least eat it or give it away. You cannot *eat* your poems or novels; you can certainly give copies to your friends; but they are only bored by them, whereas they really *like* your apples and pears. And if this is the case with friends, still more is it so with editors and publishers. I will wager that while these latter individuals

would unanimously reject any MS. of mine with scorn, there is not one of them who would refuse the gift of a hamper filled with fine Blenheim oranges. Next year I intend to submit contributions of this kind to various editors, just to see how many will be 'declined with thanks'—it will be an interesting experiment.

If amateur fruit growing is not very profitable, still less is amateur farming. Luckily for ourselves we have never made any large venture in it; but this year, as we had a meadow and also a pony, we thought it would be a fine thing to make our own hay. I accordingly got hold of two native agriculturists, and asked their advice as to the best course to pursue. From their remarks I gathered that haymaking involved the employment of a great many labourers at unusually high wages and an abnormally large consumption of beer. I made some feeble efforts to bargain for a reduction of terms, but totally without avail. 'Farmer Hodges, Farmer Brown, &c., always paid at the same rate, and why should I expect to be let off for less?' This argument was unanswerable. The worst of it was that I could not by any means get my friends to state what the *whole* cost would amount to. 'It moight be a matter o' three pun', it moight be three pun' ten—it moight be four pun'—'cordin' as the weather turned out.' I had some misgivings, but determined to persevere. The hay was made—fortunately in splendid weather. It was successfully stacked and thatched, and then a number of small bills, made out on grimy bits of paper, were submitted to my inspection. I was considerably aghast to find that the total amounted to about 5*l.* 10*s.*

'Why, I could have bought the hay for the same amount,' I remarked with some warmth to the chief agriculturist. 'You really have charged me an unreasonable price for making it.'

'Excuse me, sir,' returned my friend with an air of injured innocence, 'but we done nothing of the sort. We done it for you wonderful cheap—fact, I don't know as we hasn't lost by it. We'd ha' been only too glad to save you expense; but it wur a terrible job cuttin' that grass o' yourn. Why, Bill Siggins, ee says to me, ee niver had sich a job—not since ee wur a boy. Look at the way that there grass growed—all across an' contrary loike.'

'It looked just like other grass,' I replied with acerbity; 'at all events you have charged me a great deal, and the thing will be a clear loss to me.'

'Loss, do you think, sir? Not a bit of it. Don't fret yerself about loss. Jest look at that there rick—see how big an' solid ee



stands! Why, ee's worth ten pound this very moment, and hay'll be awful dear this winter! No, no; don't ye talk about loss!'

This was pacifying, and I settled the bills without further demur. The stack was indeed a noble object. For some time we inspected it every day, and our hearts swelled with pride as we thought of the provision we had made for the coming winter. We had paid dear for it, it was true; but then it was thoroughly good, and one could not expect to get a really good thing cheap. Our triumph, however, was of short duration. A few days after we had begun to use the hay, our gardener and factotum came to me with a long face.

'Beggin' yer pardon, sir, but have you looked at that there 'ay lately?'

'No,' returned I, with a sudden chill of apprehension. 'Nothing happened to it, I hope?'

'Nothing's 'appened to it, sir, 'cept in the ornery course of nature. It's agone mouldy. It wur a bad lot from the beginning—niver worth the trouble o' stacking.'

'Good gracious!' I exclaimed. 'What do you mean?'

'Nothing but the truth, sir; go an' see for yerself.'

I rushed out to the rick, and examined it with a trembling heart. There was no doubt about it; the hay had a mouldy smell, and emitted a powdery cloud when touched.

'It's like that all through,' said Giles consolingly. 'It warn't no good in itself, and it wur badly made. Blest if those men haven't gammoned you! I was afeared on it when I saw 'em a talkin' to you. If I might make so bold as ask, how much did you give to have that there 'ay made, sir?'

'A great deal, I am afraid, Giles,' I replied sulkily. Not for worlds would I so far lower myself in his eyes as to avow the precise figure. We tried to use that hay, but the pony turned up his nose at it, and it would only do for litter. The rick in which we had taken so much pride was now a source of grief and humiliation, and we passed it hurriedly with averted eyes. Never—no *never* would we make hay again, except in a metaphorical sense, or as an amusement, in other people's meadows.

A. L. STEVENSON.

## MY COOKS.

I CERTAINLY should not describe them as *cordons bleus*, with perhaps one bright exception; and yet they appear to have an interest all their own, for I find when visiting among my friends I am always 'drawn out' on the subject of 'My Cooks,' with a remark of this sort: 'Now, Arabella, dear, do tell us about your cooks. Have you any fresh cook story?' and after that, somehow, the subject of my *ménage* is paramount for the hour.

But where shall I begin? With my buoyant sense of importance when first setting up a kitchen of my own, and becoming the possessor of all sorts of strange culinary articles, first and foremost in my estimation was the big kettle. How gravely I had deliberated over that kettle, and even consulted the clergyman's wife, who had assisted me with much valuable advice, and assured me that the kettle must be kept carefully 'blacked!' Or shall I go still further back, to the good old schoolroom days when one's dear mother used sometimes to admit that she 'had been cookless for six weeks,' &c. &c.? And then we all set forth on a 'cook quest,' which to us children was vastly entertaining, for it meant that the pony carriage was placed at our disposal; and, under the superintendence of the governess, we visited in turns all the pleasantest country vicarages in the neighbourhood, in the hope of finding a cook 'out of place.' Looking back, this argues a very touching and simple faith in the clergy, ill according with the saying I have somewhere heard, 'The Almighty sent victuals, and the D—— sent cooks!' But to return to my personal experience. At one time, during a temporary residence at the seaside, my husband and I determined to endure such attendance as can be expected from a 'general.' A strictly honest widow was engaged; and, as the poor woman led a solitary life in the kitchen, I felt bound to enliven her existence by more conversation than one generally bestows below stairs. Never shall I forget the first occasion when the widow brought our *café noir* to us after dinner. 'Lor! just like me and me 'usband,' was her ejaculation as she set down the tray between us; and I soon found that I should hear quite enough of 'me 'usband.' I learnt to abstain from remarking on the weather; for, if it were fine, the widow would

say: 'Jist sech a day as this me 'usband died; it took twenty men to carry 'im to 'is grave.' If wet, 'me 'usband' had caught his last chill on '*jist sech* another day;' and at last I had to exclude that bond of union between all classes, known to some as 'passing the weather,' from our conversation. Great preparations were made for my mother's first visit. My factotum implored that she might be accompanied by a footman during her visit rather than a lady's maid; she declared that 'she could not wait, nohow, on a lady who was used to her footman.' Experience taught me subsequently that the good woman was slightly 'gone' on any male youth from a knife-boy upwards, and was never so happy as when waiting on *them*! The old proverb, 'Familiarity breeds contempt,' was brought home to me by my domestic. During the course of her visit, my mother, in her usual gracious way, had been to see the kitchen and its occupant, who remarked to me next morning, 'Lor, ma'am, what a fine woman your mother is; I never expected to see such a tall, 'andsome lady, and you so small!' Surely she was as good for my vanity as a bevy of schoolboy brothers! She had particularly asked for 'church privileges,' earnestly seconded by the kindly rector, who vouched for her spiritual training and good character. But as regularly as Sunday came round, and my husband and I were seated at a meagre breakfast, meagre on purpose to extend these 'church privileges' to 'the servant,' she would poke her head in at the door with 'Please, ma'am, is there any *necessity* for me to go to church this morning?' I insisted that she should go, and added that Lady Sophia, the rector's wife, particularly desired that she should do so. On her return, noticing how much better and brighter she looked, I ventured to remark on the evident benefit of the religious service. 'Lor, ma'am, yes; why, I came across Sister Sophia—no Lady Sophia I means—I knew Sister Sophia in th' 'orspital, and she made her obeisance to me so pretty like.'

With a change of residence, I changed my establishment, and thought I would embark on a younger servant, who could not remark, 'Well, ma'am, you see I'm twice your age, so I think I ought to know,' and yet, perhaps, within the hour disturb me, no matter what I was doing, to come and ornament the pie crust for her, 'for, lor, ma'am, you see as 'ow I never can cut it pretty like, for I was never larned drawing at school.'

Young, old, stout, short, they seldom knew much of their trade—one aspirant for the 'place' owned that she considered she

was a very fair hand at making 'melted butter.' I felt the want of variety in our diet would oblige me to decline this professor. Another, unused to the country, and, like Gilpin's wife, 'of a frugal mind,' took great pains in dressing a hare, which when brought to the table provoked peals of laughter. The head was quite pale, and neatly surrounded by a wreath of fresh parsley; the air of dejection about the poor animal was indescribable. On inquiry, it transpired that the cook had boiled the head to assist the soup, and had carefully sewed it on again; the parsley was to hide the join. Her sense of economy having further interpreted a giblet pie as a medley of webbed feet and beaks under a good crust, resulted in an abrupt departure.

It is strange how amusing a dish can look if dressed in the wrong way, and how few people can detect what is wrong. We are accustomed to see hares and rabbits come to table with their heads on; but have you ever seen a duck come to table in the 'altogether'? My German cook thus dressed her first English duck, and for some minutes we wondered what was unusual!

That German was a delight; her cookery was often vile, but she *was* amusing. Her first efforts at pastry-making were lamentable. 'Margarete, what was the matter with the apple tart? The crust was like a stone.' 'Oh, madame, I vorrked so harrd; I said to myself, now ze harrrder I vorrk, ze better it will be, so I rolled and I rolled, and I used all my strengzt, and now it is von stone!'

One morning Margarete bounces into my room, and bursts out in an injured voice, 'Madame, does our coachman belong to my towel?' At last I discover that she refers to the round towel in the scullery, on which the offender had wiped his hands in passing. She was always willing, always ready to work, especially if the work were not in her department; and when something in the kitchen stove had 'caught,' diffusing its odour throughout the house, denoting that Margarete was absent from her realm, often on these occasions she has been discovered polishing the drawing-room windows, or the silver, or doing something indoors or out that she was not required to do, and that was somebody else's business. It always occurred to her to have a grand 'turn out' when guests were present. I believe she gloried in making a great show of her work, and kept it and the 'sweep' consistently for 'company,' just to demonstrate to them how a house has to be kept going, and *her* capacity for doing things. The festivals of

the church were observed by Margarete by bouts of home-sickness. Curious slow Gregorian-like chantings emanated from the kitchen; and there Margarete would be discovered, prone on the table, chanting the hymns of the 'Vaterland,' sobbing out at intervals, 'Oh, my parents are so happy to-day. To-day dey are boozing wiz der friends; dey are all boozy togezer. I do vish I vas dere!' Her familiar nod and 'Gut Tag,' if by chance she met anyone on the stairs or in the passages was a source of much amusement. On Sundays she was a sight to behold. She insisted on wearing a very loud checked tweed dress and decorations of coral *en suite*, or it might be a blue velveteen dress and amber necklace, &c. One day I expected Lord E. to luncheon. Now I feel sure that in her heart of hearts Margarete was a Socialist; her lips were tightly pressed together while I was ordering luncheon for this occasion. After a while, in a most nonchalant manner, she remarks, 'Ven zat man kormes to lunch——' 'Margarete!' I interrupt, 'how often am I to remind you to say "Ma'am," when you speak to me? and you must speak of Lord E. as his Lordship, not as "zat man."' 'Ach, ven I say Lord to Gott, I cannot say it to man.' It was not easy to persuade Margarete to keep up any regular church attendance. On being expostulated with, she announced, 'In *my* country, we can be gut wisout always running to church!' She told me one morning that to make a certain pudding she required 'two eggs and one joke;' she never could distinguish between the letters *y* and *j*. As I had suffered from the constant *amours* of previous cooks, I was glad to ascertain, when she entered my service, that Margarete had a lover in her beloved Germany, to whom she professed the sincerest constancy. I understood a little of the solemnity of a German betrothal, and felt much relieved that the knot was practically tied; but observing the undue attentions of 'de postemans,' 'de butchmonger,' and other males necessary to our daily civilised existence, I ventured to remind Margarete of her betrothed so far away, at which she promptly exclaimed, 'Vat is de good of a lover wid de sea between?'—what indeed! A holiday sufficiently extended to enable Margarete to revisit the 'Vaterland' was accorded soon after this; and equipped for the voyage, in 'yachting costume' if you please, braided sailor collar and all, Margarete tearfully came to wish me good-bye, begged our photographs, placed them inside her bodice next to her heart, and departed—for a month! On her return she confided to me that she had

changed her views about men, wished to have nothing more to do with them, had broken off her engagement, and henceforth would devote herself to her profession and never think of marrying.

I remember about this time an agitation was got up among philanthropists in our neighbourhood, on behalf of postmen, and the hardship of their having an hour or two's walk on a Sunday morning—*before* the hour of Divine service, mind you! I did not sympathise with that agitation, for who knew better than I of the abundance of leisure that a postman can give himself? I know that mine had a splendid time, and thrived on it, and I soon deemed it wise to take the matter into my own hands and announce 'that a marriage had been arranged, and would shortly take place, between Margarete and "de postemans."' "

On visiting Madame Postemans in her own home, I observed that she must have found it a little difficult to get into the habit of early rising, so as to give her husband his breakfast before he started for his work. The answer was characteristic. 'Ach! I do know better *zan* zat; he do get his breakfast on his rounds.' Subsequently, during a cookless interval, Margarete came to 'oblige' for a few weeks. I neglected to *state* that I did *not* invite the whole family; but it was understood that the paternal grandmother could mind the home during Margarete's absence on duty, and it was only when startled out of a light sleep (there was illness in the house, and I was rather overwrought) at dead of night by terrific howls, that I discovered the presence of the 'baby postemans,' who had been for several days successfully secreted within cupboards while I was likely to be about. His mother said that the child was 'all right,' but wanted to 'yump,' as he was stiff. When once the child's presence was disclosed, there was no longer any reason for shutting him up in the kitchen dresser; but imagine my feelings (he was at the slobbery stage of babyhood) on finding him supplied with the patty-pans and other smaller culinary articles as toys! Ugh! He was also taught to salute us as 'Onkel' and 'Tante.' Yes, Margarete certainly had a Socialistic vein in her. Finding the scale on which I was entertaining angels unawares, I speedily terminated Margarete's term of assistance. I tried a one-legged cook; but apparently her temper had gone with her leg, and though she was a good honest servant she looked so sour, and alarmed me so much, that I used to be 'all of a tremble' when the time came to order dinner. I engaged a woman from up the country, who arrived looking

respectable and promising enough, and went upstairs to settle into her bedroom, but returned downstairs bonneted, and explained that 'she could not think of staying in a house where the lady did not provide *beds* for her servants.' 'But not only has each servant her own *bed*, but a room to herself. What do you mean?' I had much to learn; nothing less than a feather bed could be described as a 'bed' by this good woman, and as my furnishing was in advance of *that* order of things, we saw no more of her.

The Irish cook was a strange experience. I knew that she had not had a servant's training; but she was strongly recommended as a born cook, and, being a farmer's daughter, and nearly related to a member of Parliament, I was in hopes that a very little time would suffice to get her into our 'ways;' for I argued that of course she was used to a good home as a farmer's daughter, and I must own that I, in my innocence, was impressed by her relationship to an M.P., even though a Home Ruler. Kathleen O'Flinn wrote a good hand, and after some correspondence with her, and having received assurances of her respectability and suitability for a post in any lady's house, I decided on engaging her, and she came. I made great allowances for the long journey; but it was soon patent that the first thing needful was a bath, and I quietly but firmly desired Kathleen to take a hot bath without delay. She stared, and seemed at a loss to understand me; so when the necessaries were prepared I proceeded in pantomime to illustrate the proceeding. I must say that this Irishwoman was obedient, if nothing else; she did her best, and came to me later, looking decidedly lighter of complexion, but still—streaky! 'Turn up your sleeves, please.—No, you must go back and wash again.' After three protracted immersions she was 'passed,' and allowed to sit in a corner of the kitchen.

The next day I could not understand how it was that my Irishwoman was for ever walking up and down the stairs, holding on to wall and banister with both hands for dear life—up and down, over and over again. I spoke to her, and the answer, 'Shure and it's a beautiful house, m'lady, and I've never seen the loike of it before,' betrayed the fact that this was the first *house* she had lived in, and the first *staircase* she had mounted, and she was practising walking upstairs. Obviously the M.P.'s relative was unfitted for any but the meanest work, so she was set to do a little scrubbing, &c., to eke out the necessary 'month;' but 'Faith,' she 'had never seen a floor washed like that before; it



would all *come up!*' Her method was to sweep and collect the sweepings under some convenient mat. Of course she was an R.C. and *dévoté*, and she assured me that her religion forbade her to do any work on saints' days. I never before realised that five out of six days are feast days in the R.C. Calendar; to us they would have been *fasts* but for the timely charwoman, as Kathleen spent the whole day at the nearest church. Her return ticket was presented to her, and my Irish experience made me now wish to procure as ordinary an Englishwoman as possible. I succeeded in securing a very commonplace sort of person, who represented herself as engaged to a steward on board one of the great American liners. So far, so good; but I was yet to have another illustration in the futility of 'a lover across the sea,' as this woman made a dead set at the youthful gardener, ten years her junior, and gave piquancy to her courtship by an occasional heave of crockery at his head. I myself was an unseen witness of a pie-dish skimming in his direction! She soon broke off her engagement, and told me that it was owing to her intended giving way to drunkenness ashore; he was all right during a voyage, but when in port never sober. 'But, cook, you had given me to understand that he was such a very *respectable* man.' 'And so he is, mum, a most *respectable* man, I'm sure, in every way. I've always said so, and I always shall say so; but he's something dreadful when he gets at the drink.' So much for 'respectability.' I still puzzle over what that word represents to such classes; and, as I and they certainly see a different meaning in it, I have ceased to use it in my dealings with them.

For these sketches of character in that all-important functionary of every house, the cook, I have not had to draw on my fund of imagination; every circumstance is absolutely fact. My consolation in my domestic 'ups and downs' has been that though one cannot always get good service from those who offer themselves in the capacity of domestic servants, one may generally get a little amusement out of them—and why not?

## THE CASTLE INN.<sup>1</sup>

BY STANLEY WEYMAN.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

#### MR. FISHWICK'S DISCOVERY.

LET us return to Sir George Soane and his companions, whom we left stranded in the little alehouse at Bathford; waiting through the small hours of the night for a conveyance to carry them forward to Bristol. Soap and water, a good meal, and a brief dog's sleep, in which Soane had no share—he spent the night walking up and down—and from which Mr. Fishwick was continually starting with cries and moanings, did something to put them in better plight, if in no better temper. When the dawn came, and with it the chaise and four for which they had sent to Bath, they issued forth haggard and unshaven, but resolute; and long before the shops in Bristol had begun to look for custom, the three, with Sir George's servant, descended before the old Bush Inn, near the Docks.

The attorney held strongly to the opinion that they should not lose a second in seeking the persons whom Mr. Dunborough had employed; the least delay, he urged, and the men might be gone into hiding. But on this a wrangle took place, in the empty street before the half-roused inn; with a milk-girl and a couple of drunken sailors for witnesses. Mr. Dunborough, who was of the party will-he, nill-he, and asked nothing better than to take out in churlishness the pressure put upon him, stood firmly on it, he would take no more than one person to the men. He would take Sir George, if he pleased, but he would take no one else.

'I'll have no lawyer to make evidence!' he cried boastfully. 'And I'll take no one but on terms. I'll have no Jemmy Twitcher with me. That's flat.'

Mr. Fishwick in a rage was for insisting; but Sir George stopped him. 'On what terms?' he asked the other.

'If the girl is unharmed, we go unharmed. One and all!' Mr. Dunborough answered. 'Damme!' he continued with a great

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1898, by Stanley Weyman, in the United States of America.

show of bravado, 'do you think I am going to peach on 'em? Not I. There's the offer, take it or leave it!'

Sir George might have broken down his opposition by the same arguments addressed to his safety which had brought him so far. But time was everything, and Soane was on fire to know the best or worst. 'Agreed!' he cried. 'Lead the way! And do you, Mr. Fishwick, await me here.'

'We must have time,' Mr. Dunborough grumbled, hesitating, and looking askance at the attorney—he hated him. 'I can't answer for an hour or two. I know a place, and I know another place, and there is another place. And they may be at one or another, or the other. D'you see?'

'I see that it is your business,' Sir George answered with a glance, before which the other's eyes fell. 'Wait until noon, Mr. Fishwick. If we have not returned at that hour, be good enough to swear an information against this gentleman, and set the constables to work.'

Mr. Dunborough muttered that it was on Sir George's head if ill came of it; but that said, swung sulkily on his heel. Mr. Fishwick, when the two were some way down the street, ran after Soane, and asked in a whisper if his pistols were primed; when he returned, the servant, whom he had left at the door of the inn, had vanished. The lawyer made a shrewd guess that he would have an eye to his master's safety, and retired into the house, better satisfied.

He got his breakfast early, and afterwards dozed awhile, resting his aching bones in a corner of the coffee-room. It was nine and after, and the tide of life was roaring through the channels of the city when he roused himself, and to divert his suspense and fend off his growing stiffness went out to look about him. All was new to him, but he soon wearied of the main streets, where huge drays laden with puncheons of rum and bales of tobacco threatened to crush him, and tarry seamen, their whiskers hanging in ringlets, jostled him at every crossing. Turning aside into a quiet court he stood to stare at a humble wedding which was leaving a church. He watched the party out of sight, and then, the church-door standing open, he took the fancy to stroll into the building. He looked about him, at the maze of dusty green-cushioned pews with little alleys winding hither and thither among them; at the great three-decker with its huge sounding-board; at the royal escutcheon, and the faded tables of the law, and was

about to leave as aimlessly as he had entered, when he espied the open vestry door. Popping in his head, his eye fell on a folio bound in sheepskin which lay open on a chest, a pen and ink beside it.

The attorney was in that state of fatigue of body and languor of mind in which the smallest trifle amuses. He tip-toed in, his hat in his hand, and licking his lips as he thought of the law-cases that lay enshrined in the register he perused a couple of entries with a kind of professional enthusiasm. He was beginning a third, which, being by a different hand, was a little hard to decipher, when a black gown that hung on a hook over against him swung noiselessly outward, and a little old man emerged from the door, which it masked.

The lawyer, who was stooping over the register, raised himself guiltily. 'Hallo!' he said to cover his confusion.

'Hallo!' the old man answered with a wintry smile. 'A shilling, if you please.' And he held out his hand.

'Oh!' said Mr. Fishwick, much chap-fallen, 'I was only just—looking out of curiosity.'

'It is a shilling to look,' the new-comer retorted with a chuckle. 'Only one year, I think? Just so, anno domini seventeen hundred and sixty-seven. A shilling, if you please.'

Mr. Fishwick hesitated, but in the end professional pride swayed him, he drew out the coin, and grudgingly handed it over. 'Well,' he said, 'it is a shilling for nothing. But, I suppose, as you have caught me, I must pay.'

'I've caught a many that way,' the old fellow answered as he pouched the shilling. 'But there, I do a lot of work upon them. There is not a better register kept anywhere than that, nor a parish clerk that knows more about his register than I do, though I say it that should not. It is clear and clean from old Henry Eighth, with never a break except at the time of the siege, and there is an entry about that that you could see for another shilling. No? Well, if you would like to see a year for nothing—No? Now, I know a lad, an attorney's clerk here, name of Chatterton, would give his ears for the offer. Perhaps your name is Smith?' the old fellow continued, looking curiously at Mr. Fishwick. 'If it is, you may like to know that the name of Smith is in the register of burials just three hundred and eighty-three times—was last Friday! Oh, it is not Smith? Well, if it is Brown, it is there two hundred and seventy times—and one over!'

'That is an odd thought of yours,' said the lawyer, staring at the conceit.

'So many have said,' the old man chuckled. 'But it is not Brown? Jones, perhaps? That comes two hundred and—Oh, it is not Jones?'

'It is a name you won't be likely to have once, let alone four hundred times!' the lawyer answered, with a little pride—heaven knows why.

'What may it be, then?' the clerk asked, fairly put on his mettle. And he drew out a pair of glasses, and settling them on his forehead looked fixedly at his companion.

'Fishwick.'

'Fishwick! Fishwick? Well, it is not a common name, and I cannot speak to it at this moment. But if it is here, I'll wager I'll find it for you. D'you see, I have them here in alphabet order,' he continued, bustling with an important air to a cupboard in the wall, whence he produced a thick folio bound in roughened calf. 'Ay, here's Fishwick, in the burial book, do you see, volume two, page seventeen, anno domini 1750, seventeen years gone, that is. Will you see it? 'Twill be only a shilling. There's many pays out of curiosity to see their names.'

Mr. Fishwick shook his head.

'Dods! man, you shall!' the old clerk cried generously; and turned the pages. 'You shall see it for what you have paid. Here you are. "*Fourteenth of September, William Fishwick, aged eighty-one, barber, West Quay, died the eleventh of the month.*" No, man, you are looking too low. Higher on the page! Here 'tis, do you see? Eh—what is it? What's the matter with you?'

'Nothing,' Mr. Fishwick muttered. But he continued to stare at the page with a face struck suddenly sallow, and the hand that rested on the corner of the book shook as with the ague.

'Nothing?' said the old man, staring suspiciously at him. 'I do believe it is something. I do believe it is money. Well, it is five shillings to extract. So there!'

That seemed to change Mr. Fishwick's view. 'It might be money,' he confessed, still speaking thickly and as if his tongue were too large for his mouth. 'It might be,' he repeated. 'But—I am not very well this morning. Do you think you could get me a glass of water?'

'None of that!' the old man retorted sharply, with a sudden

look of alarm. 'I would not leave you alone with that book at this moment for all the shillings I have ever taken! So if you want water you've got to get it.'

'I am better now,' Mr. Fishwick answered. But the sweat that stood on his brow went far to belie his words. 'I—yes, I think I'll take an extract. Sixty-one, was he?'

'Eighty-one, eighty-one, it says. There's pen and ink, but you'll please to give me five shillings before you write. Thank you kindly. Lord save us, but that is not the one. You're taking out the one above it.'

'I'll have 'em all—for identification,' Mr. Fishwick replied, wiping his forehead nervously.

'Sho! No need.'

'I think I will.'

'What, all?'

'Well, the one before and the one after.'

'Dods! man, but that will be fifteen shillings!' the clerk cried, aghast at such extravagance.

'You'll only charge for the entry I want,' the lawyer said with an effort.

'Well—we'll say five shillings for the other two.'

Mr. Fishwick closed with the offer, and with a hand which was still unsteady paid the money and extracted the entries. Then he took his hat, and hurriedly, his eyes averted, turned to go.

'If it's money,' the old clerk said, staring at him as if he could never satisfy his inquisitiveness, 'you'll not forget me?'

'If it's money,' Mr. Fishwick said with a ghastly smile, 'it shall be some in your pocket.'

'Thank you kindly. Thank you kindly, sir! Now who would ha' thought when you stepped in here you were stepping into fortune, so to speak?'

'Just so,' Mr. Fishwick answered, a spasm distorting his face. 'Who'd have thought it? Good morning!'

'And good-luck!' the clerk bawled after him. 'Good-luck!'

Mr. Fishwick fluttered a hand backward, but made no answer. He hastened to escape from the court; this done, he plunged through a stream of traffic, and having thus covered his trail, he went on rapidly, seeking a quiet corner. He found one in a square among some warehouses, and standing, pulled out the copy he had made from the register. It was neither on the first nor the second entry, however, that his eyes dwelled, while the hand

that held the paper shook as with the ague. It was the third fascinated him :—

*'September 19th,' it ran, 'at the Bee in Steep Street, Julia, daughter of Anthony and Julia Soane of Estcombe, aged three, and buried the 21st of the month.'*

Mr. Fishwick read it thrice, his lips quivering ; then he slowly drew from a separate pocket a little sheaf of papers, frayed at the corners, and soiled with much and loving handling. He selected from these a slip : it was one of those which Mr. Thomasson had surprised on the table in his room at the Castle Inn. It was a copy of the attestation of birth 'of Julia, daughter of Anthony Soane of Estcombe, England, and Julie his wife ;' the date, August 1747 ; the place Dunquerque.

The attorney drew a long quivering breath, and put the papers up again, the packet in the place from which he had taken it, the extract from the Bristol register in another pocket. Then, after drawing one or two more sighs as if his heart was going out of him, he looked dismally upwards as in protest against heaven. At length he turned and went back to the thoroughfare, and there, with a strangely humble air, asked a passer-by the nearest way to Steep Street.

The man directed him ; the place was near at hand. In two minutes Mr. Fishwick found himself at the door of a small but decent grocer's shop, over the portal of which a gilded bee seemed to prognosticate more business than the fact performed. An elderly woman, stout and comfortable-looking, was behind the counter. Eyeing the attorney as he came forward, she asked him what she could do for him, and before he could answer reached for the snuff canister.

He took the hint, requested an ounce of the best Scotch and Havannah mixed, and while she weighed it, asked her how long she had lived there.

*'Twenty-six years, sir,' she answered heartily, 'Old Style. For the New, I don't hold with it nor them that meddle with things above them. I am sure it brought me no profit,' she continued, rubbing her nose. 'I have buried a good husband and two children since they gave it us !'*

*'Still, I suppose people died Old Style ?'* the lawyer ventured.

*'Well, well, may be.'*

*'There was a death in this house seventeen years gone this September, if I remember rightly,' he said.*



The woman pushed away the snuff and stared at him. 'Two, for the matter of that,' she said sharply. 'But should I remember you?'

'No.'

'Then, if I may make so bold, what is't to you?' she retorted. 'Do you come from Jim Masterson?'

'He is dead,' Mr. Fishwick answered.

She threw up her hands. 'Lord! And he a young man, so to speak! Poor Jim! Poor Jim! It is ten years and more—ay, more—since I heard from him. And the child? Is that dead too?'

'No, the child is alive,' the lawyer answered, speaking at a venture. 'I am here on her behalf, to make some inquiries about her kinsfolk.'

The woman's honest red face softened and grew motherly. 'You may inquire,' she said, 'you'll learn no more than I can tell you. There is no one left that's kin to her. The father was a poor Frenchman, a monsieur that taught the quality about here; the mother was one of his people—she came from Canterbury, where I am told there are French and to spare. But according to her account she had no kin left. He died the year after the child was born, and she came to lodge with me, and lived by teaching, as he had; but 'twas a poor livelihood, you may say, and when she sickened, she died—just as a candle goes out.'

'When?' Mr. Fishwick asked, his eyes glued to the woman's face.

'The week Jim Masterson came to see us bringing the child from foreign parts—that was buried with her. 'Twas said his child took the fever from her and got its death that way. But I don't know. I don't know. It is true, they had not brought in the New Style then; but——'

'You knew him before? Masterson, I mean?'

'Why, he had courted me!' was the good-tempered answer. 'You don't know much if you don't know that. Then my good man came along and I liked him better, and Jim went into service and married Oxfordshire way. But when he came to Bristol after his journey in foreign parts, 'twas natural he should come to see me; and my husband, who was always easy, would keep him a day or two—more's the pity, for in twenty-four hours the child he had with him began to sicken, and died. And never was man in such a taking, though he swore the child was not his,

but one he had adopted to serve a gentleman in trouble; and because his wife had none. Any way, it was buried along with my lodger and nothing would serve but he must adopt the child she had left. It seemed ordained-like, they being of an age, and all. And I had two children to care for, and was looking for another that never came; and the mother had left no more than buried her with a little help. So he took it with him, and we heard from him once or twice, how it was, and that his wife took to it, and then—well, writing's a burden. But—, with renewed interest, 'she's a well-grown girl by now, I guess?'

'Yes,' the attorney answered absently, 'she's—she's a well-grown girl.'

'And is poor Jim's wife alive?'

'Yes.'

'Ah,' the good woman answered, looking thoughtfully into the street. 'If she were not—I'd think about taking to the girl myself. It's lonely at times without chick or child. And there's the shop to tend. She could help with that.'

The attorney winced. He was looking ill; wretchedly ill. But he had his back to the light, and she remarked nothing save that he seemed to be a sombre sort of body and poor company. 'What was the Frenchman's name?' he asked after a pause.

'Parry,' said she. And then, sharply, 'Don't they call her by it?'

'It has an English sound,' he said doubtfully, evading her question.

'That is the way he called it. But it was spelled Pare, just Pare.'

'Ah,' said Mr. Fishwick. 'That explains it.' He wondered miserably why he had asked what did not in the least matter; since, if she were not a Soane, it mattered not who she was. After an interval he recovered himself with a sigh. 'Well, thank you,' he continued, 'I am much obliged to you. And now—for the moment—good-morning, ma'am. I must wish you good-morning,' he repeated, hurriedly; and took up his snuff.

'But that is not all?' the good woman exclaimed in astonishment. 'At any rate you'll leave your name?'

Mr. Fishwick pursed up his lips and stared at her gloomily. 'Name?' he said at last. 'Yes, ma'am. Brown. Mr. Peter Brown, the—the Poultry——'

'The Poultry!' she cried, gaping at him helplessly.

'Yes, the Poultry, London. Mr. Peter Brown, the Poultry, London. And now I have other business and shall—shall return another day. I must wish you good-morning, ma'am. Good-morning.' And thrusting his face into his hat, Mr. Fishwick hurried precipitately into the street, and with singular recklessness hastened to plunge into the thickest of the traffic, leaving the good woman in a state of amazement.

Nevertheless, he reached the inn safely. When Mr. Dunborough returned from a futile search, his failure in which condemned him to another twenty-four hours in that company, the first thing he saw was the attorney's gloomy face awaiting them in a dark corner of the coffee room. The sight reproached him subtly, he knew not why; he was in the worst of tempers, and, for want of a better outlet, he vented his spleen on the lawyer's head.

'D—n you!' he cried, brutally. 'Your hang-dog phiz is enough to spoil any sport! Hang me if I believe that there is such another mumping, whining, whimpering sneak in the 'varsal world! D'you think anyone will have luck with your tallow face within a mile of him?' Then longing, but not daring, to turn his wrath on Sir George, 'What do you bring him for?' he cried.

'For my convenience,' Sir George retorted, with a look of contempt that for the time silenced the other. And that said, Soane proceeded to explain to Mr. Fishwick, who had answered not a word, that the rogues had got into hiding; but that by means of persons known to Mr. Dunborough it was hoped that they would be heard from that evening or the next. Then, struck by the attorney's sickly face, 'I am afraid you are not well, Mr. Fishwick,' Sir George continued, more kindly. 'The night has been too much for you. I would advise you to lie down for a few hours and take some rest. If anything is heard I will send word to you.'

Mr. Fishwick thanked him, without meeting his eyes; and after a minute or two retired. Sir George looked after him, and pondered a little on the change in his manner. Through the stress of the night Mr. Fishwick had shown himself alert and eager, ready and not lacking in spirit; now he had depression written large on his face, and walked and bore himself like a man sinking under a load of despondency.

All that day the messenger from the slums did not come; and between the two men downstairs strange relations prevailed. Sir

George did not venture to let the other out of his sight ; yet there were times when they came to the verge of blows, and nothing but the knowledge of Sir George's swordsmanship kept Mr. Dunborough's temper within bounds. At dinner, at which Sir George insisted that the attorney should sit down with them, Dunborough drank his two bottles of wine, and in his cups fell into a strain peculiarly provoking.

'Lord ! you make me sick,' he said. 'All this pother about a girl that a month ago your high mightiness would not have looked at in the street. You are vastly virtuous now, and sneer at me ; but, damme ! which of us loves the girl best ? Take away her money, and will you marry her ? I'd 'a done it, without a rag to her back. But take away her money, and will you do the same, Mr. Virtuous ?'

Sir George, listening darkly, and putting a great restraint on himself, did not answer. And in a moment Mr. Fishwick got up suddenly, and hurried from the room—with a movement so abrupt that he left his glass in fragments on the floor.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### A ROUGH AWAKENING.

LORD ALMERIC continued to vapour and romance as he mounted the stairs. Mr. Pomeroy attended, sneering, at his heels. The tutor followed, and longed to separate them. He had his fears for the one and the other, and was relieved when his lordship at the last moment hung back, and with a foolish chuckle proposed a plan that did more honour to his vanity than his taste.

'Hist !' he whispered. 'Do you two stop outside a minute, and you'll hear how kind she'll be to me ! I'll leave the door ajar, and then in a minute do you come in and roast her ! Lord, 'twill be as good as a play !'

Mr. Pomeroy shrugged his shoulders. 'As you please,' he growled. 'But I have known a man go to shear and be shorn !'

Lord Almeric smiled loftily, and waiting for no more, winked to them, turned the handle of the door, and simpered in.

Had Mr. Thomasson entered with him, the tutor would have seen at a glance that he had wasted his fears ; and that trouble threatened from a different quarter. The girl, her face a blaze of excitement and shame and eagerness, stood in the recess of the

farther window seat, as far from the door as she could go; her attitude the attitude of one driven into a corner. And from that alone her lover should have taken warning. But Lord Almerie saw nothing. Crying 'Most lovely Julia!' he tripped forward to embrace her, and, the wine emboldening him, would have clasped her in his arms, if she had not abruptly checked him by a gesture unmistakable even by a man in his flustered state.

'My lord,' she said, hurriedly, yet in a tone of pleading—and her head hung a little, and her cheeks began to flame. 'I ask your forgiveness for having sent for you. Alas, I have also to ask your forgiveness for a more serious fault. One—one which you may find it less easy to pardon,' she added, her courage failing.

'Try me!' the little beau answered with ardour; and he struck an attitude. 'What would I not forgive to the loveliest of her sex?' And under cover of his words he made a second attempt to come within reach of her.

She waved him back. 'No!' she said. 'You do not understand.'

'Understand?' he cried, effusively. 'I understand enough to—but why, my Chloe, these alarms, this bashfulness? Sure,' he spouted,

'How can I see you, and not love,  
While you as Opening East are fair?  
While cold as Northern Blasts you prove,  
How can I love and not despair?'

And then, in wonder at his own readiness, 'S'help me! that's uncommon clever of me,' he said. 'But when a man is in love with the most beautiful of her sex——'

'My lord!' she cried, stamping the floor in her impatience. 'I have something serious to say to you. Must I ask you to return to me at another time? Or will you be good enough to listen to me now?'

'Sho, if you wish it, child,' he said lightly, taking out his snuff-box. 'And to be sure there is time enough. But between us, sweet——'

'There is nothing between us!' she cried, impetuously snatching at the word. 'That is what I wanted to tell you. I made a mistake when I said that there should be. I was mad; I was wicked, if you like. Do you hear me, my lord?' she continued, passionately. 'It was a mistake. I did not know what I was doing. And, now I do understand, I take it back,'

Lord Almeric gasped. He heard the words, but the meaning seemed incredible, inconceivable; the misfortune, if he heard aright, was too terrible; the humiliation too overwhelming! He had brought listeners—and for this! ‘Understand?’ he cried, looking at her in a confused, chap-fallen way. ‘Hang me if I do understand! You don’t mean to say— Oh, it is impossible, stuff me! it is. You don’t mean that—that you’ll not have me? After all that has come and gone, ma’am?’

She shook her head; pitying him, blaming herself, for the plight in which she had placed him. ‘I sent for you, my lord,’ she said, humbly, ‘that I might tell you at once. I could not rest until I had told you. I did what I could. And, believe me, I am very, very sorry.’

‘But do you mean—that you—you jilt me?’ he cried, still fighting off the dreadful truth.

‘Not jilt!’ she said, shivering.

‘That you won’t have me?’

She nodded.

‘After—after saying you would?’ he wailed.

‘I cannot,’ she answered. Then, ‘Cannot you understand?’ she cried, her face scarlet. ‘I did not know until—until you went to kiss me.’

‘But—oh, I say—but you love me?’ he protested.

‘No, my lord,’ she said firmly. ‘No. And there, you must do me the justice to acknowledge that I never said I did.’

He dashed his hat on the floor: he was almost weeping. ‘Oh, damme!’ he cried, ‘a woman should not—should not treat a man like this. It’s low. It’s cruel! It’s—’

A knock on the door stopped him. Recollection of the listeners, whom he had momentarily forgotten, revived, and overwhelmed him. With an oath he sprang to shut the door, but before he could intervene Mr. Pomeroy appeared smiling on the threshold; and behind him the reluctant tutor.

Lord Almeric swore, and Julia, affronted by the presence of strangers at such a time, drew back, frowning. But Bully Pomeroy would see nothing. ‘A thousand pardons if I intrude,’ he said, bowing this way and that, that he might hide a lurking grin. ‘But his lordship was good enough to say a while ago, that he would present us to the lady who had consented to make him happy. We little thought last night, ma’am, that so much beauty and so much goodness were reserved for one of us.’

Lord Almeric looked ready to cry. Julia, darkly red, was certain that they had overheard; she stood glaring at the intruders, her foot tapping the floor. No one answered, and Mr. Pomeroy, after looking from one to the other in assumed surprise, pretended to hit on the reason. 'Oh, I see; I spoil sport!' he cried with coarse joviality. 'Curse me if I meant to! I fear we have come *mal à propos*, my lord, and the sooner we are gone the better.

'And though she found his usage rough,  
Yet in a man 'twas well enough!'

he hummed, with his head on one side and an impudent leer. 'We are interrupting the turtle doves, Mr. Thomasson, and had better be gone.'

'Curse you! Why did you ever come?' my lord cried furiously. 'But she won't have me. So there! Now you know.'

Mr. Pomeroy struck an attitude of astonishment. 'Won't have you?' he cried. 'Oh, stap me! you are biting us.'

'I'm not! And you know it!' the poor little blood answered, tears of vexation in his eyes. 'You know it, and you are roasting me!'

'Know it?' Mr. Pomeroy answered in tones of righteous indignation. 'I know it? So far from knowing it, my dear lord, I cannot believe it! I understood that the lady had given you her word.'

'So she did.'

'Then I cannot believe that a lady would anywhere, much less under my roof, take it back. Madam, there must be some mistake here,' Mr. Pomeroy continued warmly. 'It is intolerable that a man of his lordship's rank should be so treated. I'm forsworn if he has not mistaken you.'

'He does not mistake me now,' she answered, trembling and blushing. 'What error there was I have explained to him.'

'But, damme——'

'Sir!' she said with spirit, her eyes sparkling. 'What has happened is between his lordship and myself. Interference on the part of any one else is an intrusion, and I shall treat it as such. His lordship understands——'

'Curse me! He does not look as if he understood,' Mr. Pomeroy cried, allowing his native coarseness to peep through. 'Sink me, ma'am, there is a limit to prudishness. Fine words butter no parsnips. You plighted your troth to my guest, and



I'll not see him thrown over i' this fashion. These airs and graces are out of place. I suppose a man has some rights under his own roof, and when his guest is jilted before his eyes'—here Mr. Pomeroy frowned like Jove—'it is well you should know, ma'am, that a woman no more than a man can play fast and loose at pleasure.'

She looked at him with disdain. 'Then the sooner I leave your roof the better, sir,' she said.

'Not so fast there, either,' he answered with an unpleasant smile. 'You came to it when you chose, and you will leave it when we choose; and that is flat, my girl. This morning, when my lord did you the honour to ask you, you gave him your word. Perhaps to-morrow morning you'll be of the same mind again. Any way, you will wait until to-morrow and see.'

'I shall not wait on your pleasure,' she cried, stung to rage.

'You will wait on it, ma'am! Or 'twill be the worse for you.'

Burning with indignation she turned to the other two, her breath coming quick. But Mr. Thomasson gazed gloomily at the floor, and would not meet her eyes; and Lord Almeric, who had thrown himself into a chair, was glowering sulkily at his shoes. 'Do you mean,' she cried, 'that you will dare to detain me?'

'If you put it so,' he answered, grinning, 'I think I dare take it on myself.'

His voice full of mockery, his insolent eyes stung her to the quick. 'I will see if that be so,' she cried, fearlessly advancing on him. 'Lay a finger on me if you dare! I am going out. Make way, sir.'

'You are not going out!' he cried between his teeth; and held his ground in front of her.

When she was within touch of him her courage failed her; they stood a second or two gazing at one another, the girl with heaving breast and cheeks burning with indignation, the man with cynical watchfulness. Suddenly, shrinking from actual contact with him, she sprang aside, and was at the door before he could intercept her. But with a rapid movement he turned on his heel, seized her round the waist before she could open the door, dragged her shrieking from it, and with an oath—and not without an effort—flung her panting and breathless into the window-seat. 'There!' he cried ferociously, his blood fired by the struggle; 'lie there! And behave yourself, my lady, or I'll find means to quiet you. For you,' he continued, turning fiercely on the tutor, whose face the sudden scuffle and the girl's screams had

blanched to the hue of paper, 'did you never hear a woman squeak before? And you, my lord? Are you so dainty? But, to be sure, 'tis your lordship's mistress,' he continued ironically. 'Your pardon. I forgot that. I should not have handled her so roughly. However, she is none the worse, and 'twill bring her to reason.'

But the struggle and the girl's cries had shaken my lord's nerves. 'D—n you!' he cried hysterically, and with a stamp of the foot, 'you should not have done that.'

'Pooh, pooh,' Mr. Pomeroy answered lightly. 'Do you leave it to me, my lord. She does not know her own mind. 'Twill help her to find it. And now, if you'll take my advice, you'll leave her to a night's reflection.'

But Lord Almeric only repeated, 'You should not have done that.'

Mr. Pomeroy's face showed his scorn for the man whom a cry or two and a struggling woman had frightened. Yet he affected to see art in it. 'I understand. That is the right line to take,' he said; and he laughed unpleasantly. 'No doubt it will be put to your lordship's credit. But now, my lord,' he continued, 'let us go. You will see she will have come to her senses by to-morrow.'

The girl had remained passive since her defeat. But at this she rose from the window-seat where she had crouched, slaying them with furious glances. 'My lord,' she cried passionately, 'if you are a man, if you are a gentleman—you'll not suffer this.'

But Lord Almeric, who had now recovered from his temporary panic, and was as angry with her as with Pomeroy, shrugged his shoulders. 'Oh, I don't know,' he said resentfully. 'It has naught to do with me, ma'am. I don't want you kept, but you have behaved uncommon low to me; curse me, you have. And 'twill do you good to think on it. Stap me, it will!'

And he turned on his heel and sneaked out.

Mr. Pomeroy laughed insolently. 'There is still Tommy,' he said. 'Try him. See what he'll say to you. It amuses me to hear you plead, my dear; you put so much spirit into it. As my lord said, before we came in, 'tis as good as a play.'

She flung him a look of scorn, but did not answer. Mr. Thomasson shuffled his feet uncomfortably. 'There are no horses,' he faltered, cursing his indiscreet companion. 'Mr. Pomeroy means well, I know. And as there are no horses, even if nothing prevented you, you could not go to-night, you see.'

Mr. Pomeroy burst into a shout of laughter and clapped the stammering tutor (fallen miserably between two stools) on the back. 'There's a champion for you!' he cried. 'Beauty in distress! Lord! how it fires his blood and turns his look to flame! What! going, Tommy?' he continued, as Mr. Thomasson, unable to bear his raillery or the girl's fiery scorn, turned and fled ignobly. 'Well, my pretty dear, I see we are to be left alone. And, damme! quite right too, for we are the only man and the only woman of the party, and should come to an understanding.'

Julia looked at him with shuddering abhorrence. They were alone; the sound of the tutor's retreating footsteps was growing faint. She pointed to the door. 'If you do not go,' she cried, her voice shaking with rage, 'I will rouse the house! I will call your people! Do you hear me? I will so cry to your servants that you shall not for shame dare to keep me! I will break this window and cry for help!'

'And what do you think I should be doing meanwhile?' he retorted with an ugly leer. 'I thought I had shown you that two could play at that game. But there, child, I like your spirit! I love you for it! You are a girl after my own heart, and, damme! we'll live to laugh at those two old women yet!'

She shrank farther from him with an expression of loathing. He saw the look, and scowled, but for the moment he kept his temper. 'Fie! the little Masterson playing the grand lady!' he said. 'But there, you are too handsome to be crossed, my dear. You shall have your own way to-night, and I'll come and talk to you to-morrow, when your head is cooler and those two fools are out of the way. And if we quarrel then, my beauty, we can but kiss and make it up. Look on me as your friend,' he added, with a leer from which she shrank, 'and I vow you'll not repent it.'

She did not answer, she only pointed to the door. And finding that he could draw nothing from her, he went at last. But on the threshold he turned, met her eyes with a grin of meaning, and took the key from the inside of the lock. She heard him insert it on the outside, and turn it, and had to grip one hand with the other to stay the scream that arose in her throat. She was brave beyond most women; but the ease with which he had mastered her, the humiliation of contact with him, the conviction of her helplessness in his grasp lay on her still. They filled her with fear; which grew more definite as the light, already low

in the corners of the room, began to fail, and the shadows thickened about the dingy furniture, and she crouched alone against the barred window, listening for the first tread of a coming foot—and dreading the night.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### MR. POMEROY'S PLAN.

MR. POMEROY chuckled as he went down the stairs. Things had gone so well for him, he owed it to himself to see that they went better. He had gone up, determined to effect a breach even if it cost him my lord's enmity. He descended, the breach made, the prize open to competition, and my lord obliged by friendly offices and unselfish service.

Mr. Pomeroy smiled. 'She is a saucy baggage,' he muttered, 'but I've tamed worse. 'Tis the first step is hard, and I have taken that. Now to deal with Mother Olney. If she were not such a silly fool, or if I could get rid of her and Jarvey, and put in the Tamplins, all would be easy. But she'd talk! The kitchen wench need know nothing; for visitors, there are none in this damp old hole. Win over Mother Olney and the Parson—and I don't see where I can fail. The wench is here, safe and tight, and bread and water, damp and loneliness will do a great deal. She don't deserve better treatment, hang her impudence!'

But when he appeared in the hall an hour later, his gloomy face told a different story. 'Where's Doyley?' he growled; and stumbling over a dog, kicked it howling into a corner. 'Has he gone to bed?'

The tutor, brooding sulkily over his wine, looked up. 'Yes,' he said, as rudely as he dared—he was sick with disappointment. 'He is going in the morning.'

'And a good riddance!' Pomeroy cried with an oath. 'He's off it, is he? He gives up?'

The tutor nodded gloomily. 'His lordship is not the man,' he said, with an attempt at his former manner, 'to—to——'

'To win the odd trick unless he holds six trumps,' Mr. Pomeroy cried. 'No, by God! he is not. You are right, Parson. But so much the better for you and me!'

Mr. Thomasson sniffed. 'I don't follow you,' he said stiffly.

'Don't you? You weren't so dull years ago,' Mr. Pomeroy answered, filling a glass as he stood. He held it in his hand and looked over it at the other, who, ill at ease, fidgeted in his chair. 'You could put two and two together then, Parson, and you can put five and five together now. They make ten—thousand.'

'I don't follow you,' the tutor repeated, steadfastly looking away from him.

'Why? Nothing is changed since we talked—except that he is out of it! And that that is done for me for nothing, which I offered you five thousand to do. But I am generous, Tommy. I am generous.'

'The next chance is mine,' Mr. Thomasson cried, with a glance of spite.

Mr. Pomeroy, looking down at him, laughed—a galling laugh. 'Lord! Tommy, that was a hundred years ago,' he said contemptuously.

'You said nothing was changed!'

'Nothing is changed in my case,' Mr. Pomeroy answered confidently, 'except for the better. In your case everything is changed—for the worse. Did you take her part upstairs? Are your hands clean now? Does she see through you or does she not? Or, put it in another way, my friend. It is your turn; what are you going to do?'

'Go,' the tutor answered viciously. 'And glad to be quit.'

'You withdraw?'

Mr. Thomasson shrugged his shoulders.

Mr. Pomeroy sat down opposite him. 'You'll withdraw, but you'll not go,' he said in a low voice; and drinking off half his wine, set down the glass and regarded the other over it. 'Five and five are ten, Tommy. You are no fool, and I am no fool.'

'I am not such a fool as to put my neck in a noose,' the tutor retorted. 'And there is no other way of coming at what you want, Mr. Pomeroy.'

'There are twenty,' Pomeroy returned coolly. 'And, mark you, if I fail, you are spun, whether you help me or no. You are blown on, or I can blow on you! You'll get nothing for your cut on the head.'

'And what shall I get if I stay?'

'I have told you.'

'The gallows.'

'No, Tommy. Eight hundred a year.'

Mr. Thomasson sneered incredulously, and having made it plain that he refused to think—thought! He had risked so much in this enterprise, gone through so much; and to lose it all! He cursed the girl's fickleness, her coyness, her obstinacy! He hated her. And do what he might for her now, he doubted if he could cozen her or get much from her. Yet in that lay his only chance, apart from Mr. Pomeroy. His eye was cunning and his tone sly when he spoke again.

'You forget one thing,' he said. 'I have only to open my lips after I leave.'

'And I am nicked?' Mr. Pomeroy answered. 'True. And you will get a hundred guineas, and have a worse than Dunborough at your heels.'

The tutor wiped his brow. 'What do you want?' he whispered.

'That old hag of a housekeeper has turned rusty,' Pomeroy answered. 'She has got it into her head something is going to be done to the girl. I sounded her and I cannot trust her. I could send her packing, but Jarvey is not much better, and talks when he is drunk. The girl must be got from here.'

Mr. Thomasson raised his eyebrows scornfully.

'You need not sneer, you fool!' Pomeroy said with a little spirt of rage. 'Tis no harder than to get her here.'

'Where will you take her?'

'To Tamplin's farm by the river. There, you are no wiser, but you may trust me. I can hang the man, and the woman is no better. They have done this sort of thing before. Once get her there, and, sink me! she'll be glad to see the parson!'

The tutor shuddered. The water was growing very deep. 'I'll have no part in it!' he said hoarsely. 'No part in it, so help me, God!'

'There's no part for you!' Mr. Pomeroy answered with grim patience. 'Your part is to thwart the scheme.'

Mr. Thomasson, half risen from his chair, sat down again. 'What do you mean?' he muttered.

'You are her friend. Your part is to help her to escape. You'll sneak to her room to-morrow, and tell her that you'll steal the key when I'm drunk after dinner. You'll bid her be ready at eleven, and you'll let her out, and have a chaise waiting at the

end of the avenue. The chaise will be there, you'll put her in, you'll go back to the house. I suppose you see it now?'

The tutor stared in wonder. 'She'll get away,' he said.

'Half a mile,' Mr. Pomeroy answered drily, as he filled his glass. 'Then I shall stop the chaise—with a pistol if you like—jump in—a merry surprise for the nymph; and before twelve we shall be at Tamplin's. And you'll be free of it.'

Mr. Thomasson pondered, his face flushed, his eyes moist. 'I think you are the devil!' he said at last.

'Is it a bargain? And see here. His lordship has gone silly on the girl. You can tell him before he leaves what you are going to do. He'll leave easy, and you'll have an evidence—of your good intentions!' Mr. Pomeroy added with a chuckle. 'Is it a bargain?'

'I'll not do it!' Mr. Thomasson cried faintly. 'I'll not do it!'

But he sat down again, their heads came together across the table; they talked long in low voices. Presently Mr. Pomeroy fetched pen and paper from a table in one of the windows; where they lay along with one or two odd volumes of Crebillon, a tattered Hoyle on whist, and Foote's jest book. A note was written and handed over, and the two rose.

Mr. Thomasson would have liked to say a word before they parted as to no violence being contemplated or used; something smug and fair-seeming that might go to show that his right hand did not understand what his left was doing. But even his impudence was unequal to the task, and with a shamefaced good-night he secured the memorandum in his pocket-book and sneaked up to bed.

He had an excellent opportunity of carrying out Pomeroy's suggestion to make Lord Almeric his confidant. He found his lordship awake, tossing and turning in the shade of the green moreen curtains; in a pitiable state between chagrin and rage. But the tutor's nerve failed him. He had few scruples, but he was weary and sick at heart, and for that night he felt that he had done enough. So to all my lord's inquiries he answered as sleepily as consisted with respect, until the young roué's suspicions were aroused, and on a sudden he sat up in bed, his nightcap quivering on his head.

'Tommy!' he cried feverishly. 'What is afoot downstairs? Now, do you tell me the truth.'

'Nothing,' Mr. Thomasson answered soothingly.



'Because—well, she's played it uncommon low on me, uncommon low she's played it,' my lord repeated pathetically; 'but fair is fair, and willing's willing! And I'll not see her hurt. Pom's none too nice, I know, but he's got to understand that. I'm none of your Methodists, Tommy, as you are aware, and no one more so! But, s'help me! no one shall lay a hand on her against her will!'

'My dear lord, no one is going to!' the tutor answered, quaking in his bed.

'That is understood, is it? Because it had better be!' the little lord continued with unusual vigour. 'I vow and protest I have no cause to stand up for her. She's a d—d saucy baggage, and has treated me with—with d—d disrespect. But, oh Lord! Tommy, I'd have been a good husband to her. I would indeed. And been kind to her. And now—she's made a fool of me! She's made a fool of me!'

And my lord took off his nightcap, and wiped his eyes with it.

---

## CHAPTER XXX.

### A GREEK GIFT.

JULIA, left alone, and locked in the room, passed such a night as a girl instructed in the world's ways might be expected to pass in her position, and after the rough treatment of the afternoon. The room grew dark, the dismal garden and weedy pool that closed the prospect faded from sight; and still as she crouched by the barred window, or listened breathless at the door, all that part of the house lay silent. Not a sound of life came to the ear.

By turns she resented and welcomed this. At one time, pacing the floor in a fit of rage and indignation, she was ready to dash herself against the door, or scream and scream and scream until some one came to her. At another the recollection of Pomeroy's sneering smile, of his insolent grasp, revived to chill and terrify her; and she hid in the darkest corner, hugged the solitude, and, scarcely daring to breathe, prayed that the silence might endure for ever.

But the hours in the dark room were long and cold; and at times the fever of rage and fear left her in the chill. Of this came another phase through which she passed—as the night wore on and nothing happened. Reverting to him who should have

been her protector, but had become her betrayer—and by his treachery had plunged her into this misery—a doubt of his guilt on a sudden flashed into her mind and blinded her by its brilliance. Had she done him an injustice? Had the abduction been after all concerted not by him but by Mr. Thomasson and his confederates? The setting down near Pomeroy's gate, the reception at his house, the rough, hasty suit paid to her—were these all parts of a drama cunningly arranged to mystify her? And was he innocent? Was he still her lover, true, faithful, almost her husband?

If she could think so! She rose, and softly walked the floor in the darkness, tears raining down her face. Oh, if she could be sure of it! At the thought, the thought only, she glowed from head to foot with happy shame. And fear? If this were so, if his love were still hers, and hers the only fault—of doubting him, she feared nothing! Nothing! She felt her way to a tray in the corner where her last meal remained untasted, and ate and drank humbly, and for him. She might need her strength.

She had finished, and was groping her return to the window-seat, when a faint rustle as of some one moving on the other side of the door caught her ear. In the darkness, brave as she had fancied herself an instant before, a great horror of fear came on her. She stood rooted to the spot; and heard the noise again. It was followed by the sound of a hand passed stealthily over the panels; a hand seeking, as she thought, for the key: and she could have shrieked in her helplessness. But while she stood, her face turned to stone, came instant relief. A voice, subdued in fear, whispered, 'Hist, ma'am, hist! Are you asleep?'

She could have fallen on her knees in her thankfulness. 'No! no!' she cried eagerly. 'Who is it?'

'It is me—Olney!' was the answer. 'Keep a heart, ma'am! They are gone to bed. You are quite safe.'

'Can you let me out?' Julia cried. 'Oh, let me out!'

'Let you out?'

'Yes, yes! Let me out? Please let me out.'

'God forbid, ma'am!' was the horrified answer. 'He'd kill me. And he has the key. But——'

'Yes? yes?'

'Keep your heart up, ma'am, for Jarvey'll not see you hurt; nor will I. You may sleep easy. And good-night!'

She stole away before Julia could answer; but she left comfort. In a glow of thankfulness the girl pushed a chair against the

door, and, wrapping herself for warmth in the folds of the shabby curtains, lay down on the window seat. She was willing to sleep now, but the agitation of her thoughts, the whirl of fear and hope, as she went again and again over the old ground, kept her long awake. The moon had risen and run its course, decking the old garden with a solemn beauty as of death, and was beginning to retreat before the dawn, when Julia slept at last.

When she awoke it was broad daylight. A moment she gazed upwards, wondering where she was; the next a harsh grating sound, and the echo of a mocking laugh brought her to her feet in a panic of remembrance.

The key was still turning in the lock—she saw it move, saw it withdrawn; but the room was empty. And while she stood staring, heavy footsteps retired along the passage. The chair which she had set against the door had been pushed back, and milk and bread stood on the floor beside it.

She drew a deep breath; he had been there. But her worst terrors had passed with the night. The sun was shining, filling her with scorn of her gaoler. She panted to be face to face with him, that she might cover him with ridicule, overwhelm him with the shafts of her woman's wit, and show him how little she feared and how greatly she despised him.

But he did not appear; the hours passed slowly, and with the afternoon came a clouded sky, and weariness and reaction of spirits; fatigue of body, and something like illness; and on that a great terror. If they drugged her in food? The thought was like a knife in the girl's heart, and while she still writhed under it, her ear caught the creak of a board in the passage, and a furtive tread that came, and softly went again, and once more returned. She stood, her heart beating; and fancied she heard the sound of breathing on the other side of the door. Then her eye alighted on a something white at the foot of the door, that had not been there a minute earlier. It was a tiny note. While she gazed at it the footsteps stole away again.

She pounced on the note and opened it, thinking it might be from Mrs. Olney. But the opening lines smacked of other modes of speech than hers, and though Julia had no experience of Mr. Thomasson's epistolary style, she felt no surprise on finding the initials F. T. appended to the message.

'Madam,' it ran. 'You are in danger here, and I in no less of being held to account for acts which my heart abhors. Openly

to oppose myself to Mr. P.—the course my soul dictates—were dangerous for us both, and another must be found. If he drink deep to-night, I will, heaven assisting, purloin the key, and release you at ten, or as soon after as may be. Jarvey, who is honest, and fears the turn things are taking, as too serious, will have a carriage waiting in the road. Be ready, hide this, and when you are free, though I seek no return for services not unattended by risk, yet if you desire to find one, an easy way may appear of requiting,

‘Madam, your devoted, obedient servant, F. T.’

Julia’s face glowed. ‘He cannot do even a kind act as it should be done,’ she thought. ‘But once away it will be easy to reward him. At worst he shall tell me how I came here.’

She spent the rest of the day divided between anxiety on that point—Mr. Thomasson’s intervention, welcome in other respects, going some way to weaken the theory she had built up with so much joy—and impatience for night to come and put an end to her suspense. She was now as much concerned to escape the ordeal of Mr. Pomeroy’s visit as she had been earlier in the day to see him. And she had her wish. He did not come; she fancied he might be willing to let the dullness and loneliness, the monotony and silence of her prison, work their effect on her mind.

Night, as welcome as it had been yesterday unwelcome, fell at last, and hid the dingy familiar objects, the worn furniture, the dusky outlook. She counted the minutes, and before it was nine by the clock was the prey of impatience, thinking the time past and gone and the tutor a poor deceiver. Ten was midnight to her; she hoped against hope, walking her narrow bounds in the darkness. Eleven found her lying on her face on the floor, heaving dry sobs of despair, her hair dishevelled. And then, on a sudden she sprang up; the key was grating in the lock. While she stared, half demented, scarcely believing her happiness, Mr. Thomasson appeared on the threshold, his head—he wore no wig—muffled in a woman’s shawl, a shaded lanthorn in his hand.

‘Come!’ he said. ‘There is not a moment to be lost.’

‘Oh!’ she cried hysterically, yet kept her shaking voice low; ‘I thought you were not coming. I thought it was all over.’

‘I am late,’ he answered nervously; his face was pale, his shifty eyes avoided hers. ‘It is eleven o’clock, but I could not get the key before. Follow me close and silently, child; and in a few minutes you will be safe.’

'Heaven bless you!' she cried, weeping. And would have taken his hand.

He turned from her so sharply that she marvelled; she had not judged him a man averse from thanks. But setting his manner down to the need of haste, she took the hint and prepared to follow him in silence. Holding the lanthorn so that its light fell on the floor he listened an instant, then led the way on tip-toe down the dim corridor. The house was hushed round them; if a board creaked, it seemed to her scared ears a pistol shot. At the entrance to the gallery round the hall which was partly illumined by lights still burning below, the tutor paused an instant to listen, then turned quickly from it, and by a narrow passage on the right gained a back staircase. Descending the narrow stairs he guided her by devious turnings through dingy offices and servants' quarters until they stood in safety before an outer door. To withdraw the bar that secured it, while she held the lanthorn, was for the tutor the work of an instant. They passed through, and he closed the door softly behind them.

After the confinement of her prison, the night air that chilled her temples was rapture to Julia; for it breathed of freedom. She turned her face up to the dark boughs that met and interlaced above her head, and whispered her thankfulness. Then, obedient to Mr. Thomasson's impatient gesture, she hastened to follow him along a dank narrow path that skirted the wall of the house for a few yards, then turned off among the trees.

They had left the wall no more than a dozen paces behind, when Mr. Thomasson paused, as in doubt, and raised his light. They were in a little beech-coppice that grew up to the walls of the servants' offices. The light showed the dark shining trunks, running in solemn rows this way and that; and more than one path trodden smooth across the roots. The lanthorn disclosed no more, but it was enough for Mr. Thomasson. He pursued the path he had chosen, and less than a minute's walking brought them into the avenue.

Julia drew a breath of relief and looked behind and before. 'Where is the carriage?' she whispered, shivering with excitement.

The tutor before he answered raised his lanthorn thrice to the level of his head, as if to make sure of his position. Then, 'In the road,' he answered. 'And the sooner you are in it the better, child, for I must return and replace the key before he

sobers. Or 'twill be worse for me,' he added snappishly, 'than for you!'

'You are not coming with me?' she exclaimed in surprise.

'No, I—I can't quarrel with him,' he answered hurriedly. 'I—I am under obligations to him. And once in the carriage you'll be safe enough.'

'Then please to tell me this,' Julia rejoined, her breath a little short. 'Mr. Thomasson, did you know anything of my being carried off before it took place?'

'I?' he cried effusively. 'Did I know?'

'I mean—were you employed—to bring me to Mr. Pomeroy's?'

'I employed? Good heavens! ma'am, what do you take me for?' the tutor cried in righteous indignation. 'No, ma'am, certainly not! I am not that kind of man!' And then blurring out the truth in his surprise, 'Why, 'twas Mr. Dunborough!' he said. 'And like him too! Heaven keep us from him!'

'Mr. Dunborough?' she exclaimed.

'Yes, yes.'

'Oh,' she said, in a helpless, foolish kind of way. 'It was Mr. Dunborough, was it?' And she begged his pardon.

So humbly, in a voice so broken by feeling and gratitude, that, bad man as he was, his soul revolted from the work he was upon; and for an instant, he stood still, the lanthorn swinging in his hand.

She misinterpreted the movement. 'Are we right?' she said, anxiously. 'You don't think that we are out of the road?' Though the night was dark, and it was difficult to discern anything beyond the circle of light thrown by the lanthorn, it struck her that the avenue they were traversing was not the one by which she had approached the house two nights before. The trees seemed to stand farther from one another and to be smaller. Or was it her fancy?

At any rate it was not that had moved him to stand; for in a moment, with a curious sound between a groan and a curse he led the way on, without answering her. Fifty paces brought them to the gate and the road. Thomasson held up his lanthorn and looked over the gate.

'Where is the carriage?' she whispered, startled by the darkness and silence.

'It should be here,' he answered, his voice betraying his perplexity. 'It should be here at this gate. But I—I don't see it.'

'Would it have lights?' she asked anxiously. He had opened

the gate; as she spoke they passed through, and stood together looking up and down the road. The moon was obscured, and the lanthorn's rays were of little use to find a carriage which was not there.

'It should be here, and it should have lights,' he said in evident dismay. 'I don't know what to think of it. I—ha! What is that? It is coming, I think. Yes, I hear it. It must have drawn off a little for some reason, and now they have seen the lanthorn.'

He had only the sound of wheels to go upon, but he was right; she uttered a sigh of relief as the twin lights of a carriage apparently approaching round a bend of the road, broke upon them. The lights drew near and nearer, and he waved his lamp. For a second the driver appeared to be going to pass them; then, as Mr. Thomasson again waved his lanthorn and shouted, he drew up.

'Halloa!' he said.

Mr. Thomasson did not answer, but with a trembling hand opened the door and thrust the girl in. 'God bless you!' she murmured; 'and——' He slammed the door, cutting short the sentence.

'Well?' the driver said, looking down at him, his face in shadow; 'I am——'

'Go on!' Mr. Thomasson cried peremptorily, and, waving his lanthorn again, startled the horses; they plunged away wildly, the man tugging vainly at the reins. The tutor fancied that he caught a faint scream from the inside of the chaise, but he set it down to fright caused by the sudden jerk; and, after standing long enough to assure himself that the carriage was keeping the road, he turned to retrace his steps to the house.

He was opening the gate—and his thoughts were no pleasant ones, for the devil pays scant measure—when his ear was surprised by a new sound of wheels approaching from the direction whence the chaise had come. He stood to listen, thinking he heard an echo; but in a second or two he saw lights approaching through the night precisely as the other lights had approached. Once seen they came on swiftly, and he was still standing gaping in wonder when a carriage and pair, a postboy riding and a cloaked man sitting in the rumble, swept by, dazzling him a moment; the next it was gone, whirling away into the darkness.

*(To be continued.)*



her  
he  
not

in  
a!  
ust  
en

at;  
pa-  
m.  
a  
fr.

nd  
he  
he

in

his  
ly,  
at  
he  
ng  
he

ant  
ed  
nce  
an  
gh  
ce  
in  
ed  
t;